
Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources

13th December 2018

Name of Cabinet Member:

Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources – Councillor J Mutton

Director Approving Submission of the report:

Deputy Chief Executive (Place)

Ward(s) affected:

All

Title:

Policy Contingency Funding Requests – Winter Night Shelter & Cyrenians Christmas Day Dinner

Is this a key decision?

No

Executive Summary:

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources is responsible for a Policy Contingency budget which is set aside to cover any ad-hoc one-off requests for funding that are deemed to be in line with Council's policy priorities. The Policy Contingency was reduced to £75,000 as part of the 2017/18 budget setting process. This report deals with two requests for funding from this budget.

The first request is from the HOPE Coventry charity. The HOPE Coventry charity supports initiatives that connects churches together and projects that meet the needs of the vulnerable. The Coventry Winter Night Shelter is one such project which supports the vulnerable in the City. It provides rough sleepers with support, a hot meal, a safe and warm bed for the night and breakfast for the next day. Last year they supported 24/43 of their guests to move off the streets. The Cabinet Member has already agreed informally to provide a £5,000 donation to the HOPE charity as a contribution towards replacing their 5 year old beds and sleeping bags for the Winter Night Shelter; this report recommends retrospective approval of this decision.

The other request is Coventry Cyrenians to help to provide Christmas Day meals to the homeless and vulnerable in the City at the Methodist Central Hall. The Cabinet Member has already agreed informally to provide a £2,500 donation to Coventry Cyrenians for this project.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources is requested to:

- (1) Approve, retrospectively, a decision to provide one-off grant funding of £5,000 to support the Hope Coventry charity's Winter Night Shelter project.
- (2) Approve, retrospectively, a decision to provide one-off grant funding of £2,500 to support the Coventry Cyrenians Christmas day dinner project.

List of Appendices included:

None.

Background papers:

Coventry Winter Night Shelter
<https://hopecoventry.org.uk/projects/cwns/>

Coventry Cyrenians
<http://www.coventrycyrenians.co.uk/>

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: Policy Contingency Funding Requests – Coventry HOPE Winter Night Shelter and Cyrenians Christmas Day Dinner

1. Context (or background)

- 1.1 The Cabinet Member for Strategic Finance and Resources is responsible for a Policy Contingency budget which is set aside to cover any ad-hoc one-off requests for funding that are deemed to be in line with the Council's policy priorities. The Policy Contingency was reduced to £75,000 as part of the 2017/18 budget setting process. This report deals with a requests for one- off funding from this budget for the Coventry HOPE Winter Night shelter project, and the Coventry Cyrenians Christmas dinner project.
- 1.2 Coventry Winter Night Shelter (CWNS) is a project run by Coventry Churches around the city which provides rough sleepers with support, a hot meal, and a safe and warm bed for the night and breakfast the next day. The project runs from 1st December – 31st March every year. In previous years, they have received one-off grant funding from Coventry City Council, They have requested assistance this year to help to replace sleeping bags and 5 year old beds.
- 1.3 CWNS collaborates with churches spread around the city to host the shelters, Each venue is different, but they all offer a hot meal, a place to socialise, toilets, a sleeping area, and a shower room in some venues.
- 1.4 The Hope Coventry Charity have approached the Council for support to fund the initiative. The Cabinet Member has already agreed informally to provide a £5,000 contribution to the Hope Coventry Charity and this report recommends retrospective approval of this decision.
- 1.5 Coventry Cyrenians have provided thousands of Christmas day dinners to the homeless, vulnerable and lonely of Coventry for over 30 years.
- 1.6 On Christmas Day, Coventry Cyrenians will be welcoming people to the Methodist Central Hall in Coventry for a Christmas Day meal. Many of the people who attend are homeless, vulnerable, or are alone and would like to enjoy their Christmas meal in the company of others. Last year the guests enjoyed a traditional 3 course Christmas meal and were entertained by volunteers. Guests receive gifts which are generously donated by the local community, including schools, faith groups, trade unions, local charities and voluntary groups, local companies, and the people of Coventry and Warwickshire. The Cabinet Member has already agreed informally to provide a £2,500 contribution to the Coventry Cyrenians and this report recommends retrospective approval of this decision.

2. Options considered and recommended proposal

Coventry Winter Night shelter

2.1 Option 1 – Do Nothing

This option is not recommended. As with many Cities across the country, Coventry has a number of homeless living in the City. The night shelter provides essential services to the homeless at the time of year when they are most needed.

Option 2 – Meet the funding request

This is the recommended option. Providing one-off funding will enable the Night Shelter to continue to offer shelter to the homeless over the winter period and fulfil an intention this year to replace old beds and sleeping bags.

Coventry Cyrenians Christmas day dinner

2.2 Option 1 – Do Nothing

This option is not recommended. As with many Cities across the country, Coventry has a number of homeless living in the City. Without the Cyrenians providing a Christmas day dinner, the homeless and vulnerable of the city could be without food, shelter and companionship on Christmas day.

Option 2 – Meet the Funding Request

This is the recommended option and will help the Cyrenians provide a Christmas day dinner for the homeless and vulnerable. The Cyrenians receive support from local businesses and the citizens of Coventry and Warwickshire and the Council has been asked for a small contribution. It is felt that it is appropriate for the Council to provide support.

3. Results of consultation undertaken

3.1 None

4. Timetable for implementing this decision

4.1 Due to informal approval being granted, these grants have been paid to the organisations.

5. Comments from Director of Finance and Corporate Services

5.1 Financial implications

Coventry Night shelter

The Council has provided financial support for the Night Shelter over a number of years and continues to recognise the effectiveness of the work done by the annual project.

Hope Coventry has been paid £235,000 from Coventry City Council since April 2016, primarily for the Good Neighbours project – funded by the Better Care fund Grant. as well as specific contributions to the night Shelter of £20,000 in both 2017/18 and 2016/17.

This decision would involve a one-off grant of £5,000. The ongoing financial challenges facing the Council and the need to balance policy priorities mean that the Council cannot commit to funding in future financial years.

Coventry Cyrenians Christmas dinner project

This decision would involve a one-off grant of £2,500. Coventry Cyrenians provides services to Coventry City Council for supported accommodation placements and has been paid £12,187 since April 2016 for these services.

The ongoing financial challenges facing the Council and the need to balance policy priorities mean that the Council cannot commit to funding in future financial years.

5.2 Legal implications

There are no specific legal implications resulting from the report.

6. Other implications

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

The proposed contribution to the Night Shelter and the Christmas day dinner project, will help to reduce the impact of poverty, improve health and wellbeing for the most vulnerable in the City.

6.2 How is risk being managed?

There are no specific risks resulting from the report.

6.3 What is the impact on the organisation?

Coventry Night shelter

Hope charity Coventry would receive additional funding to go directly towards the costs of running the night shelter over the winter months.

Christmas day dinner

Funding for the Christmas day dinner project will enable Coventry Cyrenians to continue to provide this service to the vulnerable citizens of Coventry.

6.4 Equalities / EIA

No specific equalities implications.

6.5 Implications for (or impact on) the environment

None

6.6 Implications for partner organisations?

The funding for both organisations will help to provide key support to the homeless and vulnerable of Coventry.

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