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Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation

Approved

Approved by Sexton Ed

Equality Impact Assessment

Introductory Information

Reference number

635

Proposal type

Budget Project

Project name

Tackling Inequalities Through Grant Aid

Decision Type

Type of decision

- Cabinet
 Cabinet Committee (e.g. Cabinet Highways Committee)
 Leader
 Individual Cabinet Member
 Executive Director/Director
 Officer Decisions (Non-Key)
 Council (e.g. Budget and Housing Revenue Account)
 Regulatory Committees (e.g. Licensing Committee)

Lead Cabinet Member

Wood Paul (LAB CLLR)

Entered on Q Tier

Yes No

Year(s)**EIA date**

24/09/2019

EIA lead

Sexton Ed

EIA contact

Harford Edd

Lead officer

Shaw Dawn

Lead Corporate Plan priority

Tackling Inequalities

Portfolio, Service and Team

Cross Portfolio

Yes No

Portfolio

People Services

People Services service(s)

Libraries and Community Services

People Services team(s)

Voluntary Sector Liaison Team

Is the EIA joint with another organisation (eg NHS)?

No Yes

Brief aim(s) of the proposal and the outcome(s) you want to achieve

To extend the majority of existing Grant Aid funding arrangements for 12 months up to 31 March 2021, managing a 2.6% cut to the public health element of the budget. A formal review of the Voluntary Sector Grant Aid as well as a wider assessment of how the Council invests in the Voluntary and Community Sector.

Impact

Under the [Public Sector Equality Duty](#) we have to pay due regard to the need to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

More information is available on the [Council website](#) including the [Community Knowledge Profiles](#).

Note the EIA should describe impact before any action/mitigation. If there are both negatives and positives, please outline these - positives will be part of any mitigation. The action plan should detail any mitigation.

Overview

Overview (describe how the proposal helps to meet the Public Sector Duty outlined above), Supporting Evidence (Please detail all your evidence used to support the EIA)

The existing three year Grant Aid strategy agreed by Cabinet in 2016 is due to end in March 2020. The new Cabinet Member wanted to undertake a formal review of the Voluntary Sector Grant Aid as well as a wider assessment of how the Council invests in the Voluntary and Community Sector. The decision to extend the majority of grants allows us to do this while ensuring that any negative impact on the vulnerable groups and communities of interest is reduced.

Impacts

Proposal has an impact on

Health

Does the Proposal have a significant impact on health and well-being (including effects on the wider determinants of health)?

Yes No

Staff

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

A number of organisations have told us through consultation that they would have to reduce staff hours and/or make a number of staff redundancies if there was a significant cut to the Grant Aid budget. Most groups report staff morale & retention is directly affected by any reduction to funding. An extension to the grant aid budget will offer some protection for staff despite the small cut to the budget.

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Many clients supported by organisations in receipt of grant aid suffer from poor health outcomes (more than 42% of beneficiaries of Grant Aid report having a disability or long-term health condition) and groups report that if there was a reduction to the grant aid budget they would be forced to reduce their service to some of the most vulnerable people in Sheffield. Extending the grant aid budget at a slightly reduce rate will mitigate this and offer some protection for clients across the city, and groups will likely be able to absorb the reduction.

Comprehensive Health Impact Assessment being complete

Yes No

Please attach health impact assessment as a supporting document below.

Public Health Leads has signed off the health impact(s) of this EIA

Yes No

Health Lead**Age****Staff**

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Grant Aid funds Lunch Clubs for older people and a number of groups that support clients who are older people. Therefore any reduction in the grant is likely to impact adversely upon people of all ages, including older people and young people. In addition to we are proposing to remove the ring-fenced BME Elders grant, which may have some negative impact on older people of a BME background. This will be mitigated as all groups currently in receipt of the BME Elders Grant will be able to apply for the Tackling Inequalities Fund and there is likely to be a priority around older people from a BME background.

Disability

Staff

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

In 2018-19 over 42% of the beneficiaries of Grant Aid described themselves as disabled or having a long term health condition. It is clear that any reduction of services due to budget cuts would have a negative impact upon disabled people in Sheffield. However the proposed cut is fairly distributed, which reduces the impact and groups will likely be able to absorb the reduction. The relaunch of the Tackling Inequalities Fund provides some mitigation and ensures that the needs of disabled people will be taken into account.

Pregnancy/Maternity**Staff**

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Although none of the funded groups work exclusively with pregnant women a number of groups report supporting pregnant women throughout their work, including people with refugee or asylum-seeker status. Although the numbers are fairly low it is clear that any reduction to the services as a result of the budget cut would have a negative impact upon pregnant women. The proposed cut will be evenly distributed which should mean that no particular group or service is disproportionately impacted, and groups will likely be able to absorb the reduction.

Race**Staff**

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

In 2018-19 49% of Grant Aid beneficiaries were from a BAME background. A large number of these are refugees and asylum-seekers. A significant number of groups funded through Grant Aid target their services specifically at BAME communities and/or have a significant proportion of BAME clients. In order to mitigate the impact of the grant reduction an even split will be used to ensure no groups are disproportionately impacted and groups will likely be able to absorb the reduction. The end of the ring-fence on the BME Elders Grant will pose an additional impact however groups can apply for the relaunched Tackling Inequalities Fund, which will likely have priorities covering BME and/or older people.

Religion/Belief

Staff

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Although none of the groups funded through Grant Aid work exclusively with people who have a religious belief or those who do not, it is clear that a number of people are supported with issues around religion, belief and non-belief. Therefore any reduction to services as a result of a budget reduction will have an impact upon people with a religious belief and those who do not. The proposed cut will be evenly distributed which should mean that no particular group or service is disproportionately impacted.

Sex

Staff

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Some of the grant aid recipients target their services specifically at women and other groups support a large number of vulnerable women even if their service is not exclusively for women, (for example in 2018-19 approximately 73% of lunch club members were women). Therefore it is clear that any reduction to services as a result of the grant aid cut would have a negative impact upon women in Sheffield. The proposed cut will be evenly distributed which should mean that no particular group or service is disproportionately impacted and groups will likely be able to absorb the reduction. The relaunch of the Tackling Inequalities Fund also provides some mitigation.

Sexual Orientation

Staff

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Although none of the funded groups work exclusively with the LGBT+ community it is clear that organisations funded through Grant Aid provide services to a large number of people from the LGBT community. Some of the asylum-seeker projects report that sexual orientation creates an additional "marginalisation" for individuals and therefore in those cases the removal of support may be even greater. The proposed cut will be evenly distributed which should mean that no particular group or service is disproportionately impacted and groups will likely be able to absorb the reduction. The relaunch of the Tackling Inequalities Fund also provides some mitigation.

Transgender

Staff

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Although none of the funded groups work exclusively with the transgender community it is likely that some of the clients supported by organisations funded through Grant Aid are transgender. The proposed cut will be evenly distributed which should mean that no particular group or service is disproportionately impacted and groups will likely be able to absorb the reduction. The relaunch of the Tackling Inequalities Fund also provides some mitigation.

Carers

Staff

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Many of the groups funded through Grant Aid offer support to carers and to people who have a care need. Therefore there may be both a direct and indirect impact upon carers in Sheffield. Any reduction in services as a result of the Grant Aid cut will have some impact upon carers. The proposed cut will be evenly distributed which should mean that no particular group or service is disproportionately impacted and groups will likely be able to absorb the reduction. The relaunch of the Tackling Inequalities Fund also provides some mitigation.

Voluntary/Community & Faith Sectors

Staff Yes No**Impact** Positive Neutral Negative**Level** None Low Medium High**Details of impact**

The Grant Aid budget is the only Council funding ring-fenced for Sheffield's Voluntary and Community Sector. The ring-fence recognises the vital role the sector has in supporting some of the most marginalised and vulnerable people in the city. The current economic climate is very challenging for the sector and organisations are seeing demand increase while funding becomes harder to obtain. Whilst Grant Aid is only ever a contribution to an organisation's overall operation it makes a massive difference in ensuring a number of key frontline services are sustainable. The sector also yields significant added value for the city. In 2018-19 grant recipients supported 27,781 individuals, employed 309 staff and 1,690 volunteers who provided 217,274 volunteer hours equivalent to a volunteer dividend of £1,955,462. Any reduction to the Grant Aid budget will have an adverse effect on the sector and the bigger the cut the bigger the impact. As the reduction will be applied evenly across all recipients it means that most of this impact will be able to be absorbed by the groups although there may be some efficiencies and small reductions in services required by groups. The relaunch of the Tackling Inequalities Fund also provides some mitigation for groups as anyone who loses funding will be able to apply for the relaunched funding streams.

Customers Yes No**Impact** Positive Neutral Negative**Level** None Low Medium High**Details of impact**

As set out above any reduction to the Grant Aid budget will have an adverse effect upon the sector and the services it delivers to its customers. Some people may be adversely affected by reductions in funding to more than one organisation. The current economic climate is challenging for the sector as they are managing increases in demand whilst funding is becoming more difficult to obtain. The proposed cut will be evenly distributed which should mean that no particular group or service is disproportionately impacted and groups will likely be able to absorb the reduction. The relaunch of the Tackling Inequalities Fund also provides some mitigation for groups as anyone who loses funding will be able to apply for the relaunched funding streams.

Cohesion**Staff** Yes No**Customers** Yes No**Impact** Positive Neutral Negative**Level** None Low Medium High**Details of impact**

A number of groups funded through Grant Aid are key partners in the city in supporting cohesion issues. Any reduction to the Grant Aid budget will have an adverse effect on their ability to undertake work supporting cohesion in Sheffield. Any groups losing funding will be able to apply for the relaunched Tackling Inequalities Fund and any cuts will be applied evenly to ensure no group is disproportionately affected and groups will likely be able to absorb the reduction. In addition to this there is still a dedicated Cohesion Fund for groups to apply for which mitigates any potential impact on Cohesion across the city.

Poverty & Financial Inclusion

Staff

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

All of the groups funded through Grant Aid contribute to Poverty & Financial inclusion in some way. Any reduction to the budget will have a negative impact. Although Grant Aid funds city-wide activity rather than targeting areas of multiple deprivation there is clear evidence that groups supported through Grant Aid support more people in areas where deprivation is highest (for example CAB help more people in Burngreave, Manor, Firth Park and Darnall than they do in other parts of the city). Any reduction to the budget will have the biggest impact upon areas of deprivation and communities living within those areas. In order to mitigate the impact of the grant reduction the reduction will be applied evenly across all recipients it means that most of this impact will be able to be absorbed by the groups although there may be some efficiencies and small reductions in services required by groups. The relaunched Tackling Inequality Fund will almost certainly have a strong push on poverty & financial inclusion which should also mitigate the negative

Armed Forces

Staff

Yes No

Customers

Yes No

Impact

Positive Neutral Negative

Level

None Low Medium High

Details of impact

Although none of the funded groups work exclusively with members, or ex-members, of the armed forces, it is likely that this client group is supported by organisations funded through Grant Aid. The proposed cut will be evenly distributed which should mean that no particular group or service is disproportionately impacted and groups will likely be able to absorb the reduction. The relaunch of the Tackling Inequalities Fund also provides some mitigation.

Supporting Documentation

Cumulative impact**Proposal has a cumulative impact** Yes No**Cumulative impact**

- Year on Year
 Across a Community of identity/interest

Details of cumulative impact

The Grant Aid budget has received a 58% reduction over the previous decade so any additional reduction is likely to have a cumulative impact. Groups have been asked to absorb these cuts and make efficiencies in the past and although we feel they will be able to manage the proposed additional reduction it is difficult to continue to expect groups to absorb the reductions to the budget. In addition to this a number of communities of interest will be affected by a cumulative impact as in many cases they access more than one service funded through Grant Aid. In some cases it is believed some of the more vulnerable and marginalised individuals may access up to 7 services funded through Grant Aid. In those cases the cumulative impact of further cuts would be significant.

Proposal has geographical impact across Sheffield Yes No**Details of geographical impact across Sheffield****Local Partnership Area(s) impacted** All Specific**Action Plan and Supporting Evidence****Action plan**

The impact questionnaire completed by current grant recipients and the wider public consultation help us to understand the impact that reducing Grant Aid would have on organisations that are currently funded. This information should be used to start the wider review of Grant Aid that will launch in December 2019.

In addition, data monitoring and contact with Grant Aid organisations during 2020-21 will help to provide an ongoing oversight of the impact of the funding reduction.

Supporting Evidence (Please detail all your evidence used to support the EIA)**Consultation****Consultation required** Yes No**Consultation start date**

16/08/2019

Consultation end date

15/09/2019

Details of consultation

Two consultations were undertaken. One was a public consultation exploring the principles of how we invest in Grant Aid, the other a closed consultation exploring the impact a cut on the Grant Aid budget would have on individual organisations and their beneficiaries.

155 people took part in the public consultation and the results showed overwhelming support for us to continue to have a Grant Aid budget as a means to invest in Sheffield's local voluntary and community sector and that this should continue to be specifically to fund city-wide activity.

The closed consultation for existing recipients of Grant Aid showed that nearly all grant recipients would face a negative impact if their individual grants were reduced significantly and that mitigation would be difficult. Although we have not yet consulted upon the impact of a 1.621% reduction to individual grant recipients it is anticipated that groups will be able to absorb the majority of these cuts. The EIA will be updated when that impact analysis is

Are Staff who may be affected by these proposals aware of them

Yes No

Are Customers who may be affected by these proposals aware of them

Yes No

If you have said no to either please say why

Once the final proposal is confirmed, and the EIA is updated to refine the likely impacts, any required communication with customers will be possible. It is expected this would be done via the organisations themselves.

Summary of overall impact

Summary of overall impact

Reduction to the Grant Aid budget will have a low negative impact upon funded groups and the people they support in Sheffield. This means that a number of communities of interest will be negatively impacted. However as the reduction is spread across all groups the impact should be mitigated to a certain extent and groups will likely be able to absorb the cuts with only some disruption to services. The relaunch of the Tackling Inequalities Fund also provides some mitigation.

Summary of evidence

Changes made as a result of the EIA

The proposals offer a level of protection to the sector. The impact analysis clearly demonstrated that any greater cut would have a more significant impact upon the services provided by Grant Aid recipients which would have led to a much greater impact on marginalised groups across Sheffield.

Escalation plan

Is there a high impact in any area?

Yes No

Overall risk rating after any mitigations have been put in place

High Medium Low None

Review date

Review date

30/09/2020

If a review date is specified, it will appear in the 'Upcoming Reviews' view when the EIA review is within 30 days.

Approved



