

Cabinet Report / Key Decision**Date: 04-12-2017**

Title: Extending Advice Grant Funding Agreements from April 2018 to March 2019	
Ward: City-wide	Cabinet lead: Cllr Asher Craig
Author: Hywel Caddy	Job title: Investment & Grants Manager

Revenue Cost: £ 560,000	Source of Revenue Funding: Investment & Grants Advice Network
Capital Cost: £ 0	Source of Capital Funding: n.a.
One off <input type="checkbox"/>	Saving <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Ongoing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Income generation <input type="checkbox"/>

Finance narrative: This paper requests Cabinet approval for the extension of 11 commissioned advice service grant agreements for a further 1 year (18/19) at a reduced budget of £560k. This will represent a reduction from 17/18's budget of £720k and thereby deliver a saving of £160k toward saving initiative FP11.

By way of additional context –

Initiative FP11 originally planned for a saving of £300k in 17/18 and a further £500k in 18/19 (thereby totalling a recurrent £800k p.a. thereafter). This saving was to come from a number of different service cost centres.

17/18's £300k has been delivered (and included an initial £100k from reduced grant agreements).

18/19's +£500k delivery in full has been considered to be at risk for several months as reported to Cabinet in Neighbourhoods' monthly budget monitor reports. +£250k for 18/19 is assessed to be achievable without significant adverse impact to advice service delivery (and this will include the further £160k from reduced grant agreements which is the subject of this paper's request for approval).

Finance Officer: Jemma Prince Interim Business Partner (30/10/17)

Summary of issue / proposal: Extension of 11 Advice Funding agreements for one year from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019

Summary of proposal & options appraisal:

A report was taken to Cabinet on the 6th September 2016 to extend the advice grant funding agreements (detailed in Appendix 1) to July 2017 whilst a 'whole-system' approach was taken in relation to advice provision in the city and £800,000 savings were made in 2017-19 against an estimated spend on advice of £8 million. Since this was set the advice budget in scope was reduced to £1.4m. However the savings target remained the same. In 17/18 we made a £300k reduction with £500k still to make in 18/19. Our challenge has been to make this saving without impacting outcomes for our citizens. Despite many varied attempts to deliver the full amount it has not been possible to find this level of saving. In January 2017 a further extension was agreed by the Strategic Director for Neighbourhoods to 31 October 2017, and on 13 July the Strategic Director agreed to a further 6 month extension to 31 March 2018 to give time for further work on redesigning the service.

We have therefore focussed on identifying the maximum amount of saving that can be made whilst protecting citizens and being sensitive to the current situation. These challenges are evident in the current context of rising need (see Appendix 1). At the same time we recognise there are issues with the existing way Information, Advice and Guidance is delivered and there is a need to implement a 'whole-system' approach moving ahead to address increasing demand and implement a more targeted early intervention approach.

The Council is consulting on a reduction on the level of savings from £500k to £250k p.a. This will require formal approval as part of the council's budget setting process in 2018. This would then allow us to have a viable budget to provide a whole system redesign and recommission services to a level that is sustainable without a major impact on our ability to deliver the outcomes for the city and without increasing costs elsewhere in the process.

In order to achieve this we propose to extend the current grant agreements for a further year from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019, with a reduction on current funding levels of £160k (£100k has already been

removed at the beginning of 2017-18). This would allow for advice agencies to continue to operate and receive funding next year whilst Universal Credit is rolled out in the city from March 2018 and allow time for the commissioning of a whole system design to be implemented in 2019-20.

A draft Commissioning plan for Information, Advice and Guidance in the city has been produced and we will be consulting on it from early February including the development of a whole system approach in the city which is proposed to cover the following key elements in the proposed model:

- A single point of access, clearing linked to the Citizen Service Point with targeted outreach sites which would be key to ensuring access to disadvantaged communities and preventing Crisis.
- Focussed on early intervention and targeting those most at risk using data analytics.
- Effective triage with online diagnostic and case management.
- External (to BCC) front end advice – maximise prevention with triage to specialist services.

Recommendation(s) / steer sought: Approve the extension of 11 Advice Funding agreements for one year from 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.

City Outcome: A city: 1) In which everyone benefits from the city's success and no-one is left behind 2) where people have access to decent jobs and affordable homes and 3) in which services and opportunities are accessible.

Health Outcome summary: Provision of advice addresses the following Public Health priorities: Social isolation; Loneliness and isolation in adult carers; Mortality rate from causes considered preventable; Children in poverty; Statutory homelessness - households in temporary accommodation; Self-reported wellbeing; Emergency readmissions within 30 days of discharge from hospital; Sickness absence rates; Percentage of active and inactive adults; Suicide rate; Excess weight in adults; Injuries due to falls in people aged 65 and over.

Sustainability Outcome summary: No material link.

Equalities Outcome summary: A greater number of women, disabled, and BME people in the city access advice services in a proportionately higher level than the population profile of the city. The Needs Analysis has recommended the following changes to advice services to address take-up for the following protected characteristic groups:

- To meet the advice needs of the most vulnerable disabled people including those with mental health problems.
- To meet the advice needs of the most vulnerable from BME communities, in particular those communities from Eastern Europe.
- To meet the advice needs of refugees and asylum seekers.
- To meet the advice needs of the most vulnerable communities of all ages across the city, in particular the needs of vulnerable older people in the central and inner wards and young people (16-25) in all wards.

Impact / Involvement of partners: Discussions have been had with advice agencies and commissioners of employment services. Advice agencies have close contact with community and city-wide agencies that work with the most vulnerable households in the City. The development of a digital solution as part of the wider provision would seek assistance through the City Office for support in this.

Consultation carried out: NLT and Executive Board.

Legal Consideration: Provided the arrangements relating to these grants ensure that they are and remain genuine grants (and accordingly that they are not contracts of any description) any decision to extend will not be subject to the Public Contract Regulations 2015, nor indeed the Councils own Procurement Rules. Consideration should still be given to ensuring that value for money is being achieved.

Legal Officer: *Eric Andrews, Team Leader, Legal Services*

DLT sign-off	SLT sign-off	Cabinet Member sign-off
Alison Comley 25-10-17	Nicki Beardmore 31-10-17	Asher Craig 26-10-17

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	YES
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	NO
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	NO
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	NO
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix G – Exempt Information	NO