



PURPOSE: Key decision

MEETING: Cabinet

DATE: 02 October 2018

TITLE	Grant Funding Plan for Information, Advice and Guidance Services	
Ward(s)	All	
Author:	Katie Britten	Job title: Investment and Grant Manager
Cabinet lead:	Clr Craig	Executive Director lead: Patsy Mellor
Proposal origin: BCC Staff		
Decision maker: Cabinet Member		
Decision forum: Cabinet		
Purpose of Report:		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the Grant funding plan for IAG services for 18 months from April 2019. The financial commitment will be £840,000 for 18 months. 		
Evidence Base:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bristol City Council has grant funded a network of community advice services through an outcomes-based grants process, open to Bristol based voluntary sector service providers since 2011-12 • Since then the landscape has changed markedly. Austerity and Welfare Reform have placed significant pressures on the advice sector whilst marked reductions in local authority budgets have necessitated a reduction in the funding towards advice provision • Universal Credit (UC) full service was introduced in Bristol in July 2018. It is estimated that 4000 working age households will be claiming UC by the end of the year. Experience of other core cities tells us that this will further increase demand on the advice sector. • In light of these challenges Bristol City Council commissioned an independent needs analysis in the city in to map demand, assess the advice sector and make recommendations (see Appendix I) • In addition The Low Commission has been reviewing services and making recommendations that have been incorporated into the Funding Plan and approach for Bristol. 		
<p>The Funding Plan has been consulted on over a 6 week period with advice sector and their comments and views have been fed into the proposal (see consultation report Appendix I)</p>		
Recommendations:		
That Cabinet		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Approve the grant funding plan for Information, Advice and Guidance Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ With a Maximum annual contract value - £560,000 		

- As part of the plan, approve the funding approach for External Information Advice and Guidance Services for an 18 month grant to the successful bidder, as an interim arrangement to maintain services while a larger project is scoped and delivered
 - Adopt the funding model as outlined in appendix A (Summary of proposed model)
2. Authorise the Executive Director Communities in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities to implement the Funding Plan and award the grant funding
To note that a wider project that is being scoped to review IAG, housing and debt services over the next 12 months as set out in the report at finance advice.

Corporate Strategy alignment:

- **Empowering and caring:-** Reduce the overall level of homelessness and rough sleeping, with no-one needing to spend a ‘second night out’
- **Fair and Inclusive:-** Help develop balanced communities which are inclusive and avoid negative impacts from gentrification.
- **Well connected:-** Reduce social and economic isolation and help connect people to people, people to jobs and people to opportunity.
- **Wellbeing:-** Tackle food and fuel poverty.

City Benefits:

Information Advice and Guidance services currently support some of the most vulnerable citizens in the city. The independent needs assessment showed:

- In 2015/16 26,369 individual people were assisted directly with their legal problems by being provided with advice or supported casework by the seven commissioned independent advice agencies and the council’s in house service.
- 12,623 of casework and advice problems related to welfare benefits, 6,927 to debt, 2,907 to employment, 2,203 to immigration and asylum and 1,410 to housing.
- In the same year £16,040,499 was raised for clients by all agencies providing free legal advice in Bristol in the form of backdated benefits, new awards, and other compensatory payments.
- £16,718,662 was written off from the debts that people owed in the same period.
- The advice sector uses Bristol City Council funding to support core costs which enables them to bring in a extra funding In 2015 this totalled approx. £2,206,933

These services contribute to the following outcomes:

- Maintain tenancies in social and private housing
- Prevent homelessness
- Support the most vulnerable individuals and families to maintain sustainable finances and maximise their income
- The most vulnerable individuals and families achieve positive results at tribunals and appeals as a result of their access to specialist advice
- Reducing financial, food and fuel poverty

Consultation Details: These plans were consulted on between 28th June and 9th August. Please see consultation report attached (appendix I)

Revenue Cost	£560,000 per annum	Source of Revenue Funding	General Fund and Public Health Grant (see finance advice)
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Capital Cost	£0	Source of Capital Funding	N/A
One off cost <input type="checkbox"/>	Ongoing cost	Saving Proposal <input type="checkbox"/>	Income generation proposal <input type="checkbox"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>			

Required information to be completed by Financial/Legal/ICT/ HR partners:

1. Finance Advice:
The total revenue cost of the Information, Advice & Guidance budget for 18/19 is £0.560m, funded through BCC general fund (£0.484m) and Public Health grant (funded by NHS England) contribution of £0.076m.

There is an outstanding issue on the review of IAG services, which were part of the Medium Term Financial Plan, with respect to IAG associated with Children’s Centres in Early Years Education. During the corporate IAG review, the £90k current cost of the Early Years posts (3 headcount) was assumed to be a saving to be absorbed into the reconfiguration of Children’s Centres. This was not, however, the original intention for the IAG review and the service provided for Early Years is now due to be reconsidered as part of the corporate exercise.

This means that the delivery of the £90k saving, the responsibility for the current and future costs of providing early years IAG services rests with the corporate IAG project.

It was agreed at CLB to achieve the 90k savings through the wider IAG project under Pam Wharfe that will examine the broader council spend on advice internally and externally. This will ensure that we are not disproportionately impacting external advice services. As a result the grant funding will now be offered over an 18 month period rather than 24 months so the saving can be achieved within the necessary time frame.

Finance Business Partner: David Tully, Interim Finance Business Partner, ACE
8 August 2018

3. Legal Advice:

The grant funding plan anticipates the funding being used by way of a grant to the lead partner in a consortium of appropriate IAG providers, who will then distribute that funding to its consortium partners. The making of such a grant does not fall within the procurement regulations or the Council’s own procurement rules. However the Council still requires a clear and fair policy on the selection of grant recipients and should ensure it can clawback monies if the funding is not used for the agreed purposes.

The Public Sector Equality duty requires the decision maker to consider the need to promote equality for persons with “protected characteristics” and to have due regard to the need to i) eliminate discrimination, harassment, and victimisation; ii) advance equality of opportunity; and iii) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not share it.

The Equalities Impact Assessment is designed to assess whether there are any barriers in place that may prevent people with a protected characteristic using a service or benefiting from a policy. The decision maker must take into consideration the information in the assessment before taking the decision.

A decision can be made where there is a negative impact if it is clear that it is necessary, it is not possible to reduce or remove the negative impact by looking at alternatives and the means by which the aim of the decision is being implemented is both necessary and appropriate.

Consultation has taken place in relation to the decision to be taken.

The Responses to the consultation must be taken into account by Cabinet when taking the decision. Cabinet should also be satisfied that proper consultation has taken place in that

- proposals were consulted on are at a formative stage;
- sufficient reasons have been given for the proposals
- adequate time has been allowed for consideration and response;

Appendix B of this report clearly sets out the process that was undertaken and how responses have been taken in to consideration by officers when developing their proposals for final decision.

Legal Team Leader: Eric Andrews, Team leader, Legal Services
19th September 2019

3. Implications on ICT:

There has been engagement with the service regarding web platforms, user research and IAG previously. Any new or continuing activity in this area must continue to engage with Digital Services and the web development team to ensure a coherent and consistent offer and avoid duplication; this should also ensure best use and value from available grant funding. There should also be engagement with the wider IT service to ensure solutions align with the wider IT strategy.

ICT Team Leader: Ian Gale – Head of IT
 7 August 2018

4. HR Advice:

There are no HR implications relating to this proposal.

HR Partner: Lorna Laing - People & Culture HR Business Partner – Adults, Children & Education
 3 August 2018

EDM Sign-off	Patsy Mellor	15/08/2018
Cabinet Member sign-off	Asher Craig	16/08/2018
CLB Sign-off	Patsy Mellor	21/08/2018
For Key Decisions - Mayor's Office sign-off	Mayor's Office	3/09/2018

Appendix A – Further essential background / detail on the proposal	YES
Appendix B – Details of consultation carried out - internal and external	YES
Appendix C – Summary of any engagement with scrutiny	NO
Appendix D – Risk assessment	YES
Appendix E – Equalities screening / impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix F – Eco-impact screening/ impact assessment of proposal	YES
Appendix G – Financial Advice	NO
Appendix H – Legal Advice	NO
Appendix I – Combined Background papers	Advice Needs Analysis
Appendix J – Exempt Information	NO

Appendix K – HR advice	NO
Appendix L – ICT	NO