


## REPORT TO CABINET

18 March 2020

<b>Subject:</b>	<b>Grant funding for Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations 2020/21 -2022/23</b>
<b>Presenting Cabinet Member:</b>	<b>Councillor Maria Crompton Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Safer Communities</b>
<b>Director:</b>	<b>David Stevens Chief Executive</b>
<b>Contribution towards Vision 2030:</b>	
<b>Key Decision:</b>	Yes
<b>Cabinet Member Approval and Date:</b>	Yes
<b>Director Approval:</b>	Yes
<b>Reason for Urgency:</b>	Urgency provisions do not apply
<b>Exempt Information Ref:</b>	Exemption provisions do not apply
<b>Ward Councillor (s) Consulted (if applicable):</b>	Boroughwide
<b>Scrutiny Consultation Considered?</b>	Scrutiny has not been consulted
<b>Contact Officer(s):</b>	Heather Chinner 0121 569 3030 Heather_chinner@sandwell.gov.uk

### DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

**That Cabinet:**

1. Approve a grant of £308,626 per annum to SCVO (Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations) from April 2020 until March 2023.

- 1.1 To seek agreement to a 3 year grant for SCVO (Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations), bringing together a range of funding streams into a single grant agreement. Bringing together fragmented funding into a single funding agreement will save time and money in terms of grant administration, provide greater stability for the SCVO staff team (leading to better services), and provide better awareness of the SCVO core funded offer.
- 1.2 SCVO provides a comprehensive range of support, information and services to front line voluntary and community sector (vcs) organisations, including: volunteer brokerage, mentoring, training, capacity building, sharing best practice and a voice for the sector. Their websites [Route2WellBeing](#) and [SandwellFamilyLife](#) enable residents to find out about vcs activities and services.

## 2 **IMPLICATION FOR VISION 2030**

- 2.1 SCVO helps to support a strong voluntary and community sector providing activities and services for residents will help to achieve Vision 2030, particularly ambitions 1 to 5 and 8.

## 3 **BACKGROUND AND MAIN CONSIDERATIONS**

3.1 Current funding arrangements for SCVO are fragmented, with short term funding for important initiatives such as Early Help and year to year approval of the funding from adults and childrens for the VCS Health and Social Care Forum and the VCS Children and Young Peoples Forum.

This has a number of adverse consequences including:

- loss of experienced staff
- stop/ start approach to important projects
- loss of momentum and traction
- loss of experience and knowledge
- difficulties in making progress with strategic work
- limited capacity to respond to emerging issues

3.2 The consolidation of funding will resolve these issues, resulting in improved services.

3.3 The short term nature of some of the funding (under 3 years) is not Compact compliant. As part of the 2019 Compact Funding Code of Practice the council has made a commitment to agree 3 year funding agreements, wherever legitimate and possible.

## 4 THE CURRENT POSITION

4.1 SCVO have continued to provide a flexible and responsive offer to Sandwell's vcs. Key achievements over the last 3 years include:

- Helped vcs organisations to secure £5,570,000 in external funding
- Provided capacity building support to over 300 organisations and provided training and information at events for over 1,400 delegates
- Secured a funding partnership with the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation leading to investment of £1,430,000 over 5 years (including a devolved grant programme to fund local VCS activity of £900,000)
- Maintained effective engagement between the vcs and statutory partners through the VCS Leaders Forum, the VCS Health and Social Care Forum and the VCS Children and Young Peoples Forum
- Established the Early Help Partnership
- Consolidated [Route2WellBeing](#)
- Established [SandwellFamilyLife](#)
- Supported the development of the Community Offer
- Developed a new volunteering offer for residents and volunteer involving organisations, including the LetsGo website
- Provided representation for the vcs in emerging health structures

## 5 CONSULTATION (CUSTOMERS AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS)

5.1 Stakeholders across the council have been consulted.

## 6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

6.1 Do nothing: the current situation will continue, with a stop start approach to important projects and initiatives.

## 7 STRATEGIC RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

7.1 It is proposed that a grant of £308,626 pa is made to SCVO from April 2020 until March 2023, which will be allocated as follows:

<b>Organisation/service</b>	<b>2020/21 £</b>	<b>2021/22 £</b>	<b>2022/23 £</b>
SCVO (Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations) – core activities	288,646	288,646	288,646
SCVO (Sandwell Council of Voluntary Organisations) – funding passed to Early Help Partnership leads	19,980	19,980	19,980
<b>Total</b>	<b>308,626</b>	<b>308,626</b>	<b>308,626</b>

This will be funded by bringing together the following budgets:

<b>Budget/funding source</b>	<b>2020/21 £</b>	<b>2021/22 £</b>	<b>2022/23 £</b>
Voluntary sector support budget	91,595	91,595	91,595
Voluntary sector support budget (volunteering support)	74,042	74,042	74,042
Public Health	41,738	41,738	41,738
Adult services	16,200	16,200	16,200
Children's Services	13,800	13,800	13,800
Childrens – Early Help Partnership	71,251	71,251	71,251
<b>Total</b>	<b>308,626</b>	<b>308,626</b>	<b>308,626</b>

## 8 **LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

### **Grant making**

The statutory power to provide grant funding is contained in section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (general power of competence). Grant funding is not subject to the requirements for competition under the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

## 9 **EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 9.1 A strong voluntary and community sector helps to support Sandwell's diverse communities and contribute to community cohesion.

## 10 **DATA PROTECTION IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

- 10.1 SCVO complies with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulations

## 11 **CRIME AND DISORDER AND RISK ASSESSMENT**

- 11.1 There are no significant risks attached to the consolidation of the grant funding for SCVO.

## 12 **SUSTAINABILITY OF PROPOSALS**

- 12.1 By confirming a core grant for SCVO for the next 3 years the council contributes to the overall stability of the voluntary sector in Sandwell – for example through the continued advice about external funding. The council is committed to 3 year funding wherever possible, as set out in the Sandwell Compact.

## 13 **HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS (INCLUDING SOCIAL VALUE)**

13.1 A strong voluntary and community sector supports the [Stronger Sandwell](#) initiative.

#### 14 **IMPACT ON ANY COUNCIL MANAGED PROPERTY OR LAND**

14.1 There is no impact on council managed property or land.

#### 15 **CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

15.1 The consolidation of the funding provided to SCVO will bring a number of benefits including:

- More stable funding, enabling SCVO to focus on service delivery
- Improved staff recruitment and retention
- Compact compliance (3 years funding, wherever legitimate and possible)
- Reduction in officer time spent confirming funding and administering monitoring processes
- Overview of the impact of council funding through single grant agreement and output and outcome monitoring

#### 16 **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

16.1 [SCVO annual reports](#). Draft grant agreement 2020/21 onwards.

**David Stevens**  
**Chief Executive**