

PFCC Decision Report

Please ensure all sections below are completed

Report reference number: 019/21

Classification Not protectively marked

Title of report: Home Office Winter Contingency Fund (WCF) (January 2021)

Area of county / stakeholders affected: Countywide

Report by: Samantha Grant

Date of report: 19th February 2021

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1. Purpose of the report

- 1.1. To seek approval to receive £68,370 from the 2020-21 Home Office Winter Contingency Fund (WCF) to distribute to local charities that support vulnerable children and have been impacted by COVID-19. The fund is for activity from 5th November 2020 to 31st March 2021.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1. To approve that the PFCC office receive the allocation of up to £68,370, on behalf of the Essex Violence and Vulnerability Partnership. With funding to be utilised to mitigate the impact that COVID-19 has had on local charitable organisations working with vulnerable young people.

3. Benefits of the proposal

- 3.1. COVID-19 pandemic has required many local charities to deliver their services using alternative methods in response to the restrictions that were enforced.
- 3.2. In order to deliver remote working this has had a financial impact on some of the organisations. This funding will help recoup some of these costs.
- 3.3. During COVID-19 there is also a change in terms of support to vulnerable children. With vulnerable children unable to directly access support services, many of the organisations have switched their delivery to online support, phone calls and offering virtual small support groups. Additional funding will support organisations manage this change in requirements for this vulnerable group through this difficult time.

- 3.4. There is a concern that the volumes of vulnerable young people requiring support services will significantly increase as COVID-19 restrictions are lessened towards the end of 2020/21. Funding will be utilised to prepare for this increased demand and ensure contact is maintained with the cohort of vulnerable children and encourage a return to face to face support when they need it and it is possible to return to these.

4. Background and proposal

- 4.1. COVID-19 has had an impact on local charities which includes
- Cost impact moving to remote/virtual working to ensure vulnerable children continue to be supported
 - Increase complexities of vulnerable children and young people
- 4.2. In response to this the Home Office Winter Contingency Fund has been allocated by the Home Office to the 18 Violence Reduction Units (VRUs) across England and Wales.
- 4.3. Essex has been awarded £68,370. This is being considered for allocation to the organisations awarded Vulnerable Children's Charities (VCC) funds, V&V Communities grants (VVCG) and adding to the programme of detached outreach youth work in identified localities across the county (delivered by voluntary sector organisations).
- 4.4. These organisations and the projects (outlined in pt 4.3) have been approved for funding previously from the Partnership within 2020/21; support children at risk of or involved in serious violence; have the capacity to deliver support in the timescales specified; and that this support will be in addition to work already planned and funded. The details regarding these will be provided in a further decision sheet.
- 4.5. For the grant rounds (VCC and VVCG) funds were awarded following a bidding process (August and December 2020) and review of the applications by a panel of stakeholders that included representatives from the PFCC, Essex Violence and Vulnerability Unit and the voluntary sector. The panel considered the applications and assessed the activity of the bids to support vulnerable children as well as the impact on delivering their service due to Covid-19.
- 4.6. For the programme of detached outreach youth work, the organisations delivering this project form part of the work programme of the V&V Partnership for 2020/21, agreed at the start of the year. The delivery is overseen by the Voice of Communities workstream and forms part of the regular reporting to the Partnership.

5. Alternative options considered and rejected

- 5.1. Various options have been considered, including an open application process. For the two grant rounds which have taken place (VCC in August 2020 and more recently VVVG in December 2020) as a Partnership we agreed an approach which included assessment by a multi-agency panel, and for the VVCG with young people assessing the applications. The timing of the WCF would not allow us to conduct another grant round to the standards we have adopted for VCC and VVCG and to be confident that the funds would be with local charities and utilised by 31st March 2021. Therefore, the proposal is to award to and add value

to local charities already receiving V&V funds. This is to ensure that the funds are utilised by 31st March 2021.

- 5.2. Therefore, the recommendation is to build on the work in place, which has been through Partnership approval routes, and where added value can be delivered.

6. Police and Crime Plan

- 6.1. This fund, will support organisations, working with the Essex Violence and Vulnerability partnership, enabling partner organisations to support the priorities within the Police and Crime Plan, in particular protecting children and vulnerable people from harm.

7. Police operational implications

- 7.1. There are no operational implications.

8. Financial implications

- 8.1. The PFCC will receive £68,370 from the 2020-21 Home Office Winter Contingency Fund. The allocation of this grant will be detailed in a further decision sheet.
- 8.2. Funding is to be used by 31st March 2021. Any underspend must be returned to the Home Office.

9. Legal implications

- 9.1. The award of the grant is subject to the PFCC's standard funding agreement with the addition of data monitoring arrangements which is outlined as a condition of the Home Office grant.

10. Staffing implications

- 10.1. There are no staffing implications.

11. Equality and Diversity implications

- 11.1. All support services to be available and accessible to all children 18 years and under. This funding will support the continuation for this during COVID-19.

12. Risks

- 12.1. There is a risk that funding will not be utilised by the end March 2021 though this is being mitigated by an assessment process and it will be made clear to organisations that unspent funding must be returned.

13. Governance Boards

- 13.1. The work supported by the grant awarded to these small organisations will be reported to the Violence and Vulnerability partnership.

Report Approval

The report will be signed off by the OPFCC Chief Executive and Treasurer prior to review and sign off by the PFCC / DPFCC.

Chief Executive / M.O.

Sign: 

Print: Darren Horsman

Date: 23 February 2021

Chief Finance Officer / Treasurer

Sign: 

Print: Julia Berry

Date: 23 february 2021

Publication

Is the report for publication?

YES
NO

If 'NO', please give reasons for non-publication (Where relevant, cite the security classification of the document(s). State 'None' if applicable)

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If the report is not for publication, the Chief Executive will decide if and how the public can be informed of the decision.

Redaction

If the report is for publication, is redaction required:

1. Of Decision Sheet? YES NO 2. Of Appendix? YES NO

If 'YES', please provide details of required redaction:

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Date redaction carried out:

Treasurer / Chief Executive Sign Off – for Redactions only

If redaction is required, the Treasurer or Chief Executive is to sign off that redaction has been completed.

Sign:

Print:

Chief Executive/Treasurer

Decision and Final Sign Off

I agree the recommendations to this report:



Sign:

Print: Roger Hirst

PFCC

Date signed: 26 February 2021

I do not agree the recommendations to this report because:

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Sign:

Print:

PFCC/Deputy PFCC

Date signed: