
Manchester City Council Report for Resolution

Report to: Communities and Equalities Scrutiny Committee – 12 October 2016

Subject: Update on Advice and the Voluntary Sector

Report of: Hazel Summers, Strategic Director, Adults Social Care

Summary

This report focuses upon a number of initiatives and support given to the voluntary and community sector. It discusses the new approach that is being developed in partnership with the voluntary sector to commission and fund a number of voluntary sector contracts and grants. The report also updates Members on the new monitoring process that has been co-designed which streamlines the process and allows organisations who have more than one funding stream with the Council to only submit one set of monitoring figures.

The report also updates Members on the work Macc has undertaken to support the Voluntary and Community Sector, with data from the first quarter of 2016-17 being provided. It covers the Ethical and Social Value benefits that Children's and Families are receiving through the procurement process as a result of the work carried out by the Ethical Procurement Task and Finish Group and the increase of Social Value weighting in tenders. The report finishes with a brief explanation of Community Asset Transfer, and how this is progressing, with 15 transfers having been completed and a further 28 in development.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to discuss the report and provide their views on the various elements of support and changed approach to VCS commissioning and funding as set out in the report.

Wards Affected: All

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Background documents (available for public inspection): None

1.0 Introduction

With the new 'Our Manchester' approach, the Council is changing the way in which it works with the voluntary sector. The Council is becoming far more partnership focused, ensuring work is co-designed and co-produced together, drawing on the knowledge of the voluntary sector knowing what works for citizens, and with the Council properly listening to its voluntary sector partners.

Previous work (2014) has included co-designing a new grant process with the sector and with Macc, which has been rolled out across the Council to ensure a consistent and proportionate process whichever team or Directorate is undertaking the commissioning. Other examples include the co-design of the Carers Network, which has now been successfully operational for 10 months and the Homeless Charter, the main fundamental change being that Experts by Experience are leading the process rather than the Council.

2.0 How the Council supports the Voluntary and Community Sector

The role of voluntary and community organisations in the city is growing in importance. The move to One Team for integrated health and social care, Early Help Hubs, Integrated Neighbourhood Management and Our Manchester, all highlight the need to better connect citizens and public services to the broad range and large number of voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises, working with our residents in every neighbourhood of the city. The Council needs these organisations to work with it on the strengths and asset based approach, recognising that some of them have been working in this way for some time.

This change means a new relationship has to be formed with the voluntary sector, a relationship of equals in which both partners listen to each other; respecting each others opinions and viewpoints The following work is being undertaken in this new context:

2.1 'Our Manchester' VCS Commissioning and Funding Process

The Council currently has 15 voluntary sector grant funding streams. It also funds the voluntary sector through contracts to provide a range of services. Much of this existing funding pays for work based in communities and broadly fits into a model of neighbourhood services: Good Neighbours groups working with older people, carers' organisations working with different communities, community associations providing activities across age ranges. Some other work, such as equalities, is focussed on communities of identity rather than place.

Pulling some of the funding strands together offers the opportunity to ensure funds are better distributed across the city and invested strategically in key organisations. Lining up the voluntary sector support function with this new arrangement will give the Council the ability to offer more tailored support to those key organisations, and could give the Council the capacity to invest in grassroots development work in those areas where there are not many well established voluntary and community groups. Tweaking existing funding will not achieve these outcomes. The Council needs to be bold in its approach to this.

Not all Council funding to the VCS will be included in the “single pot”. VCS organisations large and small provide a broad range of specified services under contract, sometimes alongside private providers e.g. homecare, supported housing. This funding is not included. The organisations that the Council will bring together in this process initially are:

- Equalities funding programme
- Health and wellbeing grants
- VCS mental health contracts
- Carers’ groups contracts
- Community association grants
- Voluntary sector support (infrastructure)

Three events have been undertaken in north, south and central community locations with VCS partners, CCG colleagues and other partners, for example, Registered Providers. These events were jointly led between the Council and MACC and were the start of a co-design process to progress the development of a new VCS commissioning and funding approach.

A co-design group consisting of VCS stakeholders, a CCG representative and Council Officers is having its inaugural meeting at the beginning of October. It will work over the autumn and winter period to co-design, in a truly collaborative way, a number of options for a single funding commissioning process which will be further consulted on by the wider VCS community later this year.

Officers are also engaged in discussions with colleagues in the CCGs and public health about how their existing and proposed grant funding pots can start to align with this approach as it develops. Connections to the funding by other public agencies could also be developed from the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, Registered Social Landlords and potentially other GM level funds. In parallel, liaison with lottery colleagues and MACC ensures any opportunities to tap into funding for capacity building funding is monitored and distributed to the wider VCS.

Officers will return to Scrutiny once the options for an Our Manchester VCS commissioning and funding approach have been consulted upon and a clearer coproduced vision of the process has been established.

2.2 New monitoring process

The Voluntary and Community Sector Development Manager has worked closely with Macc and the Commissioning Leads for

- Community Associations,
- Equalities Contracts,
- Health and Wellbeing Grants,
- Mental Health Service Grants and
- Carers Contracts

This is in order to devise a new monitoring process for the above contracts and grants. It has been developed from the monitoring process co-designed in 2014 and

refined through co-design with the Health and Wellbeing organisations. This single monitoring process ensures that each organisation has to only complete the form once, however many contracts/grant agreements they hold with the Council on the bullet pointed list above. This is to reduce bureaucracy and streamline the process both for the organisation, and for the Council. Creating the new monitoring process has also resulted in anomalies in how contracts were managed being eradicated and all contracts being managed in the same manner and standard.

The new monitoring process has been trialled for the first quarter of this year and any difficulties organisations have had have been fed back and inputted into shaping the form for the next quarter period. This joint monitoring process is the first step towards bringing the contracts across the Council together in a single process. Many organisations have responded very positively to this change.

2.3 Macc

As part of the Council's contract with Macc, the organisation provides a capacity building service for the city's voluntary sector. This is a broad area covering resources on the website <https://www.manchestercommunitycentral.org/>, one to one support and small group training. Some of the specific areas covered are governance, which means making sure organisations know about and have the right organisational form and that trustees understand the nature of their responsibilities, bidding for funding and business planning.

Macc provide the Council with quarterly monitoring information about the numbers of groups they are working with, the key issues arising and the amount of money they have supported groups to apply for, both successfully and unsuccessfully. Data from the most recent quarterly report (April-June 2016) shows:

- The capacity building team has a caseload of 133 organisations, providing a mixture of basic and in-depth support
- Funding, governance and community asset transfer are the three main areas of work
- The team has supported Manchester organisations to apply for over £1m of funding in this quarter
- Over 100 learners from 61 groups have accessed training via Macc

Training courses run / supported by Macc:

- Introduction to Commissioning and Procurement,
- Co-production,
- HMRC Seminar,
- Funding Your Project X2,
- Strategy and Commissioning,
- Trustee Roles and Responsibilities,
- Choosing a Structure,
- Radical Approaches to Commissioning,
- Community Development
- Social Media Surgery

3.0 Ethical Procurement and the Social Value of contracts

In 2014, GMCA recognised the benefits of considering the social value across wider procurement activity and commissioned the development of a bespoke policy and framework that Greater Manchester authorities could use to incorporate appropriate social value outcomes into their procurement processes. In November 2014, the Greater Manchester Social Value Policy was approved by GMCA. In January 2015, approval was given by Finance Scrutiny Committee for Manchester's Procurement Team to incorporate the Social Value Policy and accompanying Social Value Framework in all tenders.

From November 2015, as an outcome of the Ethical Procurement Task and Finish Group set up in October 2015 by the Finance Scrutiny Committee, social value weighting in tenders has been increased from 10% to 20% on all tenders issued through the Procurement Group. Providers are asked to submit in their tender response the benefits 'in kind' they will bring to the Council in relation to Social Value if they are successful following the tender process. In addition to this, to help smaller businesses, Members asked for the payment of a percentage of the contract value (where appropriate) into a MCC social fund to be available for providers to offer this as an alternative offer of social value 'in kind'. This takes the form of a percentage rebate on the value of the contract. The Social Value responses are evaluated by the tender evaluation panel members.

Some of the early benefits the Council is seeing through these changes are provider's compliance and engagement locally within the Manchester area, such as compliance with the living wage, work experience placements, apprenticeships, career workshops for local schools, volunteer days for staff supporting local community projects in Manchester, contracting with Manchester based social enterprises or community voluntary organisations.

Please see Appendix 1 which provides an extract from a recent successful tender submission applicable to the Children's & Families Directorate for Equipment and Adaptations, demonstrating the Social Value benefits that Manchester will get through this framework. In addition to the benefits stated in the appendix, the provider also agreed to contribute a 1% rebate of the total value of work commissioned under the Framework to the Council's Social Value Fund.

4.0 Community Asset Transfer

Community Asset Transfer presents local communities with the opportunity to breathe new life into public buildings, to preserve valuable community resources or develop exciting new services for local communities.

Manchester City Council owns a variety of properties across the city from which services to the public are delivered. Many of these properties also provide a base for voluntary and community sector organisations to deliver valuable services to the public. The Council recognises that the voluntary and community sector are sometimes better placed to deliver local services. The council has committed to working with partners in the voluntary and community sector to develop these buildings into community-run facilities.

Managing and maintaining a community facility can be complicated and expensive and not all groups are in a position to take on the responsibilities and costs associated with managing and maintaining a building. To ensure that community and voluntary groups remain sustainable, the Council has developed a process to work with and support community organisations that may be interested in taking over a council-owned building, to help them analyse the feasibility of taking over a building.

Organisations are supported to address the following key questions:

- Is the organisation ready for asset transfer?
- Has an appropriate asset been identified and is there a full understanding of the requirements of running and maintaining it?
- Does the organisation have a plan for how it will generate enough income to meet the running costs of the asset?

Support and advice is provided by officers from Corporate Property working closely with colleagues at MACC, the infrastructure support provider to VCS groups in the city.

To date 15 asset transfers have been completed with a further 28 in development.

The process of producing a business plan and carrying out organisational health-checks has benefits beyond a particular asset. Analysing funding opportunities, the particular needs of communities and gaps in market provision allow organisations to develop multiple new income streams and increase their independence from grant funding.

Appendix 1 - Ethical Procurement and the Social Value of contracts - an extract from a recent successful tender submission

Raise aspirations and living standards of local residents
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 100% compliance with Manchester Living Wage• 100% of staff on the contract qualified to NVQ level 2• 4 days training delivered per employee per year• 2 work experience placements per year for NVQ trainees• Skills audit for all staff on the contract and training delivered• Adaptations Training Centre in our head office• Promote work experience opportunities to local colleges• Continue to provide structured staff development.
Opportunities for children and young people
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 apprentice per £1m turnover• 1 Business Admin apprentice• Deliver 2 presentations locally to promote apprenticeships• 2 careers talks/ workshops in local schools• Managing Director join “Apprenticeship Ambassador” scheme to share our enthusiasm for apprenticeships.• Advertise opportunities and build relationships with local Connexions, schools, academies and vocational colleges.
Promoting participation and citizen engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 20 full staff days donated to support community projects which promote local engagement• Deliver 2 hours customer care and safeguarding training for all staff per year• Provide time off for staff to volunteer their time with Manchester Good Neighbours, providing befriending and support to socially isolated residents in Manchester• Donate staff time and materials to support refurbishment of local community facility
Supporting the Voluntary and Community Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commercially engage at least 1 Manchester based social enterprise or community voluntary organisation on the contract.• Build links with potential social enterprises including:• Breakthrough UK - disability awareness training for our staff• Brighter Future Workshop – donate any damaged/waste adaptations equipment for refurbishment• Emerge - recycling cardboard/confidential waste.