
Report To:	Policy & Resources Committee	Date:	19 September 2017
Report By:	Alan Puckrin/Louise Long Chief Financial Officer/Chief Officer HSCP	Report No:	SW/36/2017/AH
Contact Officer:	Andrina Hunter	Contact No:	01475 715285
Subject:	Welfare Reform Mitigation 3rd Sector Funding Annual Report 2016/17		

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a performance update on the two year funding allocated to local 3rd sector organisations to help mitigate against the impacts of welfare reform.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 The Government's national welfare reform agenda has been on-going and has, and is continuing to, impact on some of the most vulnerable members in communities. Inverclyde Council has looked at various ways to help mitigate these impacts through the range of core services it delivers and has also identified a specific earmarked reserve fund.
- 2.2 In February 2016 the Committee approved a two year allocation of funding from earmarked reserves to a number of 3rd sector organisations to help support Inverclyde residents to mitigate the impacts of on-going welfare reform changes.
- 2.3 A total of £496,000 was allocated to seven external organisations for the period 1 April 2016 until 31 March 2018. This funding either supported additional capacity within organisations or in some cases established new provision.
- 2.4 All with the exception of one, the School Credit Union pilot project, have been subject to Service Level Agreements with quarterly performance monitoring by the HSCP. The School Credit Union pilot has been supported within the Education service with appropriate monitoring and governance.
- 2.5 In the period 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017, 18,663 contacts (not individuals) were made with the externally funded organisations. These figures include information related to total service some of the organisations deliver, whilst some are specifically related to this funding stream.
- 2.6 A new Anti-Poverty Fund has now been established with discussion underway between officers and organisations as to the continuation of some of these programmes. Recommendations to extend three of the current allocations are included, with others to be the subject of a further report to Committee in February 2018.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee note the contents of this report into the use and impact of the welfare reform mitigation funding within Inverclyde.
- 3.2 It is recommended that the Committee agree the proposals to fund Financial Fitness; IHeat £75 for 75; and Inverclyde Starterpacks for a further year (2018/19) from the Anti-Poverty Fund.

3.3 It is recommended that the Committee agree to a further report in February 2018 outlining further proposals for the Anti-Poverty Fund.

Alan Puckrin
Chief Financial Officer

Louise Long
Chief Officer (HSCP)

4.0 BACKGROUND

- 4.1 The Committee receives a report each cycle providing updates on the Council's response to the major Welfare Reform changes being rolled out across the UK. The Council set aside extra funding to meet the significant financial challenges generated by these changes.
- 4.2 In February 2016, the Committee approved the use of Welfare Reform earmarked reserves to fund a number of external projects to help mitigate the effect of these reforms on the Inverclyde Community.
- 4.3 Six organisations were funded:

Organisation	2016-17 £000	2017-18 £000
Financial Fitness	30	30
ICOD	60	60
IAER	15	30
I Heat (Families)	20	20
IHAF	75	78
Starterpacks	20	20
School Credit Union	19	19
TOTAL	239	257

- 4.4 In addition, recurring funding had already been allocated to Inverclyde Foodbank (£12,000/year), Starter Packs (£7,000/year) and also I Heat for the £75 for 75 project (£40,000/year to 2018/19).

5.0 PERFORMANCE

5.1 Financial Fitness Agreed Outcomes:

- To deliver a generic welfare benefits advice service to Inverclyde residents
- To provide 600 client interventions per year (1200 over funding period)

Over the course of 2016/17 Financial Fitness supported a total of 358 clients over 1,161 interventions. General advice on entitlement was the most popular reason for attendance with 200 clients presenting with advice on entitlement to Personal Independence Payments (PIP) also high. Many clients attended with more than one issue which shows the complexity of presentations.

In terms of interventions, this was mostly split between providing general advice on entitlement (210 clients) and assisting clients to make an initial benefit claim for a benefit (137 clients). Mandatory Reconsiderations were submitted on behalf of 11 clients over the course of the year.

5.2 ICOD Agreed Outcomes:

- Deliver provision of welfare benefit advice and support for disabled clients
- Attend benefit medicals with disabled clients
- Provide 270 interventions with disabled clients per year

Over the course of the 2016/17, ICOD supported a total of 478 clients over 948 interventions. The majority of these related to disability benefits (Personal Independence Payments, Disability Living Allowance or Attendance Allowance) and Employment and Support Allowance (ESA) support. During the year, a total of 149 ESA matters were addressed with some clients being supported with multiple issues relating to ESA. In addition support was provided on a range of

other issues e.g. general benefit entitlement; Scottish Welfare Fund; Council Tax. During the year, ICOD supported a total of 78 clients to attend medical assessments. The outcome of 25 of these assessments is known: 14 were made a PIP award; 2 were refused a PIP award; 1 received Enhanced rate for daily living and mobility; 1 was at Mandatory Reconsideration Stage; 1 received enhanced rate for daily living and mobility; 1 received standard rate daily living; 1 was kept on the same rate until 2021; and 4 received no award.

From 1 August 2017 ICOD has ceased to exist, therefore the funding allocation for these outcomes has been allocated to CVS Inverclyde for the remainder of 2017/18 to deliver a number of similar outcomes. CVS Inverclyde is currently developing a volunteer led scheme to support clients with attendance at medicals.

5.3 IAER Agreed Outcomes:

- Provide specialist employment support advice and representation to clients who are in work with priority given to those covered by the Equalities Act, who are or are likely to be affected by the changes to the requirements of Universal Credit conditionality, including in-work conditionality
- Provide 40 interventions in year 1 and 100 interventions in year 2
- Roll-out training on employment rights to local advice services including DWP

Unfortunately IAER were unable to deliver the service due to a lack of referrals and demand for the specific new service it was agreed they would deliver, therefore the funding was not allocated.

5.4 Futureskills (RCH) Agreed Outcomes:

- Provide one-to-one digital skills support to 216 Inverclyde residents per annum and one-to-one budgeting advice and support to 54 Inverclyde residents per annum
- To continue to provide 'Tech-I Tea Parties' throughout Inverclyde as demand requires

Over the course of 2016/17 Future Skills supported 384 Inverclyde residents with a variety of issues. The most provided type of support related to emails with 87% (333 clients) being supported with this particular issue which includes creating email addresses and supporting customers to send/receive emails. General ICT was the second most popular service with 82% (314 clients) receiving this type of support covering general ICT advice and tuition. During the funding period, Future Skills held 10 Tech-i Tea Parties in sheltered housing venues in Inverclyde reaching a total of 146 residents.

Futureskills was established to support clients with digital skills and budgeting advice related to Universal Credit (UC). As the implementation of UC was initially delayed, they diversified and supported other clients where appropriate. Universal Credit support has greatly increased by March 2017 therefore the reports for 2017/18 will show this increased focus delivering to UC clients.

5.5 IHEAT Families Agreed Outcomes:

- Provide a comprehensive fuel poverty mitigation programme to the pre 5 centres and nurseries within deprived areas of Inverclyde
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- Engage with 400 customers per annum via energy advice information sessions

During 2016/17 the programme primarily focussed on Rainbow Family Centre, and laterally Glenbrae Children's Centre. Over the course of the year I Heat supported 63 families with the total number of people who benefitted in this year was 240. Clients received various forms of support over the course of the year with each customer able to receive multiple forms of support. In total there were 111 matters addressed across the 63 client families. Almost all of

the customers (89%) received support with general energy advice. During the funding period 16 families received advice on budgeting and 10 received support with debt cancellation and reduction. Take up by the nurseries and pre 5 centres has been disappointingly low therefore contact with education services headquarters staff has been made to encourage this.

5.6 Starter Packs Agreed Outcomes:

- Provide packs of basic household items to vulnerable clients setting up new tenancies
- Provide 140 vulnerable clients each year with packs

Over the course 2016/17 Starterpacks supported 591 clients who were referred from support organisations across Inverclyde with a total of 3,579 packs issued. These figures relate to total numbers receiving packs rather than specifically related to the Council's funding allocation. The main referral agents were River Clyde Homes and HSCP Homeless service.

In addition to the £20,000, Starterpacks receive £7,000 for support with property costs.

5.7 IHEAT £75 for 75 project Agreed Outcomes:

- Support 200 customers per annum via energy advice home visits
- Continue the '£75 for 75' project to provide payments to Inverclyde residents over 75 who are in fuel poverty or fuel fear and Emergency Fund

During the year 2016/17, 271 over 75 year olds were supported with a payment of £75 towards their fuel bills. All clients were provided with I Heat advice alongside the payment. The fund supported 17 customers with an emergency payment related to their energy. This includes support with boiler breakdowns; access to hot water; replacement heaters etc. The total amount paid out was £3,617.69.

5.8 Foodbank Agreed Outcomes:

- Contribution of £12,000 towards running costs for Inverclyde Foodbank on a recurring basis, reviewed annually

The following figures relate to total numbers seen at the Foodbank rather than specifically related to the Council's funding allocation. During the funding period, the Foodbank received a total of 9,228 referrals for food parcels. The organisation with the highest number of referrals was the Council's Discretionary Payment Team with 1,528 followed by Addictions team with 1,288. In total 16,069 people (12,017 adults and 4,052 children) received food packs. There were a variety of circumstances for why food vouchers were requested including low income and debt, and around half the reasons related to 'benefit changes' and 'benefit delays'.

5.9 Tail O' the Bank School Credit Union (Inversavers) Agreed Outcomes:

- All Primary 7 children in all Local Authority Primary Schools the opportunity to receive a Credit Union Bank Account with £10 deposited
- S5/S6 pupils, will be encouraged to facilitate and run the credit union from their own school and model behaviour around a positive attitude to money, with the support of the Tail O' the Bank Credit Union

All primary schools were emailed an application form in June 2016 and Head teachers were asked to print one for each child in Primary 7, all children were asked to return the form back to the school with the parent/carer signature and a member of staff from Tail O' the Bank was responsible for collecting the applications. 250 applications were returned from a possible 782 (32%) from across Inverclyde and these were processed with an account being opened for them in August 2016. In June 2017 a further 121 applications were completed for young people to receive their Inversavers account. The Tail O' the Bank will continue to encourage young people through the secondary schools to apply for the scheme throughout August/September

2017 and to return their applications; they are however, disappointed in the returns. Two Secondary Schools (Port Glasgow High School and Notre Dame High School) have put a framework in place to start providing school credit union schemes starting August 2017, the Inversavers member of staff has been supporting the establishment of these and a third school (St Stephens High School) is currently discussing how they could establish a credit union. Craigmarnloch School is also participating with all members of the school being given the opportunity to receive an account and start to save from within the school.

6.0 2018/19 PROPOSALS

6.1 The Policy & Resources Committee approved in principle that £235,000 from the Anti-Poverty Fund for 2018/19 is used to continue some of the currently funded projects where appropriate. In order to determine this, officers have reviewed progress against outcomes in 2016/17.

6.2 It is proposed, that based on performance in 2016/17, funding for 2018/19 is allocated to the following programmes:

- Financial Fitness - £30,000 to continue the generic welfare benefits support.
- StarterPacks - £20,000 to continue the provision of basic household goods.
- IHeat £75 for 75 - £40,000 to continue the support for fuel poverty for the elderly.

6.3 Officers will meet with the other individual organisations to determine further progress against their outcomes in 2017/18 with current and future demand on services reviewed. A report in February 2018 will set out further proposals for Committee approval.

7.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

7.1 As detailed in the report.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
02626	Anti-Poverty Fund	2018/19	90		

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
Welfare Reform	PtOB	2018/19	19		Continued funding for Starter Packs and Foodbank

Legal

7.2 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Human Resources

7.3 There are no HR implications arising from this report.

Equalities

7.4 Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

Yes See attached appendix

No

This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

7.5 **Repopulation**

There are no repopulation implications arising from this report.

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 None.