1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1.1 To set out the proposed Performance Indicators for the 2021 to 2023 Voluntary Sector Grant Agreements.

2. INFORMATION

2.1 The Council has four-year Voluntary Sector Grant Agreements (VSGA) with voluntary organisations for the provision of a range of services linked to corporate objectives. The contract length provides certainty to the organisations involved, which has been very much welcomed by the sector.

2.2 The VSGAs were awarded to voluntary organisations, recognising that the voluntary sector was best placed to achieve the objectives identified.

2.3 As part of the review prior to the funding bid process in 2016, the core service objectives and key outcomes were incorporated into the service specifications for each VSGA, details of which are provided in Appendix 1.

2.4 These outcomes include but are not limited to:
   - Increasing healthy living
   - Reducing crime, discrimination and anti-social behaviour
   - Increasing financial awareness and money management
   - Reducing homelessness
   - Reducing poverty
   - Reducing discrimination
   - Increasing access to town centre

2.5 Achieving these key outcomes provides better solutions for the families and individuals, enhancing the quality of life for local residents.

2.6 Included in the review was the recognition that the work undertaken by the voluntary organisations needed to have an increased focus on taking person-centred approach rather than an intervention on just one aspect of someone’s life experience. For example, someone with poor mental health may be struggling to manage their finances; poor housing conditions might be contributing to poor mental
health and someone with a poor credit history is likely to struggle to find or maintain
a tenancy.

2.7 At the time of the review, there was also recognition of reductions funding for
voluntary sector organisations impacting on the sector and on the client base they
serve. This could potentially increase the risk that more people went unsupported
or fall into a cycle of need, putting more pressure on statutory services dealing with
more people in crisis.

2.8 When the Executive Committee agreed the four-year VSGAs at the meeting on 16th
November 2016 it did so with the caveat that it would review the funding in light of
its budget position for years three and four.

2.9 At the Executive Committee meeting on 14th November 2018 members agreed that
the Council was in a financial position whereby it could continue to fund the Service
Providers, at the current levels for the years 2019/20 and 2020/21. Appendix 2
provides a summary of the Council’s VSGAs and annual grant amount.

2.10 The Executive Committee approved funding on 13th November 2019 to extend the
provision for a further two years beyond March 2021, taking the funding to March
2023 as outlined in Appendix 2. After which point in time any future service provision
will be made by North Northamptonshire Council.

2.11 As part of the approval for extending the funding to March 2023, the opportunity was
taken to review the current service specifications and agreements, to ensure they
are ‘fit for purpose’ and that they continue to be relevant for the individuals they
support across the Borough.

2.12 All of the voluntary organisations have a signed VSGA with the Council which sets
out the obligations for both parties. These will be reissued as part of the extended
funding to cover the period from April 2021 to March 2023.

2.13 The Council has the option of deferring or reviewing all or part of agreed grant
payments where the agreement / service specification have not been met, subject to:
   • A report to the Monitoring & Audit Committee and to the Executive
     Committee
   • Consultation with the organisation and other funders
   • The opportunity for the organisation to make a representation to the
     Executive Committee

3. PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

3.1. All service specifications have been revised, in conjunction with Officers from the
Legal Team, Council Lead Officers and are out for consultation with Providers. The
sections are as outlined in Table 1.
Table 1 – VSGA Specification Structure 2021-2023

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Heading</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Core Objectives of the Project</td>
<td>Outlines the main focus of the Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Project</td>
<td>Key deliverables of the Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Availability</td>
<td>Outlines the when the Project will be available and the interaction with the Council</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Outcomes</td>
<td>Expectations of the Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Indicators</td>
<td>Targets for delivery and reporting to demonstrate effectiveness of the Project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Report</td>
<td>Outline of the information to be provided in the Annual Report</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional Requirements</td>
<td>Other expectations, including Safeguarding and Training</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2. Proposed Core Service Objectives and Key Outcomes have been set out in Appendix 3. In revising these, we have taken the opportunity to consider previous performance together with feedback from the Provider.

3.3. The timetable for performance data submission for 2021/22 is set out in Table 2 below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quarter</th>
<th>Provider Performance Submission Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April - June 2021</td>
<td>9 July 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July - September 2021</td>
<td>8 October 2021</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October - December 2021</td>
<td>7 January 2022</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January - March 2022 (Annual Report)</td>
<td>8 April 2022</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. PERFORMANCE UPDATES AND INFORMATION

4.1. The proposed Performance Indicators for each specification are shown in Appendix 4. Each specification has a number of key performance indicators that a voluntary organisation report against.

4.2. During 2018/19 there was one amendment to the VSGA providing support to households requiring advice and support regarding homelessness, previously reported, due to a change in legislation.

4.3. Performance will continue to be monitored quarterly and Providers will now submit an annual report to review how the grant is being used.

4.4. The Annual Reporting proposal allows for the Provider to provide information specifically relating to their Project rather than the previous generic reporting as shown in Appendix 5 Table 1.

4.5. The proposed Annual Report contents are set out in Appendix 5 Table 2 for all grants.

4.6. To date, all VSGA providers are performing well this year (20/21) despite the challenges due to the Covid-19 pandemic. For example, Youth Works have been focussing on mental health support for young people offering a variety of services via social media.

5. CONSULTATION AND CUSTOMER IMPACT

5.1. We are taking the opportunity to strengthen the Performance Indicators and to review the service specifications, to ensure best value from the continued investment for the next two financial years (2021-2023), in consultation with VSGA holders.

5.2. The Service Providers are required to provide detailed information on their performance against their specification on the relevant indicators. Quarterly monitoring meetings are held between the Service Provider and Council Officers to allow the opportunity to develop a relationship with the Provider, examine any emerging issues or priorities, and manage and address any performance issues.

6. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

6.1. Grant Agreement funding to the voluntary sector continues to contribute towards the Council’s corporate objectives.
7. **FINANCIAL/RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

7.1. The service providers receive their grant payment annually with two thirds received in April and one third in November of each financial year subject to satisfactory performance.

7.2. Future service delivery and funding commitments beyond 2023 will be a decision for North Northamptonshire Council.

8. **CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS**

8.1. The Council and its partners are committed to ongoing improvements to combat climate change implications and will continue to work with them to reduce carbon footprint where possible. Several of the VSGAs make a positive contribution to climate change objectives and outcomes.

9. **RECOMMENDATION**

The Committee notes;

9.1. The proposed changes to the Performance Indicators and Annual Reports.

9.2. The reporting timetable for 2021/22 as set out in Table 2.

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               Hazel Webb (ext. 1245)

Date: