

REPORT TO MEMBERS		
1.	Meeting:	Cabinet Member for Communities and Cohesion Delegated Powers
2.	Date:	25th March, 2013
3.	Title:	2013/2014 Infrastructure and Corporate Initiatives Fund (ICIB) - Grant Aid for Community Legal Advice & Information Services (All Wards)
4.	Directorate:	Resources

5. Summary

The report seeks approval to enter into grant aid contracts with a number of advice and information and advocacy providers for the financial year 2013/2014.

6. Recommendations

To agree ICIB grant aid funding to the listed voluntary and community sector organisations as set out in the report.

7. Proposals and Details

7.1 Grant Aid requirements

In line with the outcomes of the review of advice and information services, which has previously been reported to the Cabinet Member for Communities and Cohesion Delegated Powers meeting Members are asked to approve the funding amounts for the projects listed below.

Kiverton Park Independent Advice Centre (KPIAC)	£27.698
Rotherham Citizen's Advice Bureau (incorporating Ferham Advice Centre Enterprise)	£150.795
Rotherham Diversity Forum (incorporating the Immigration Project)	£30,608

7.2 Conditions of funding to be included in all specifications for VCS organisations in receipt of Council Funding

The Council in consultation with Advice in Rotherham (AiR) the umbrella group for independent advice agencies in Rotherham have agreed to the following for inclusion in service specifications as conditions of award of grant aid.

▪ AiR Membership

To be a member of AiR and deliver advice within the new model of advice for Rotherham

▪ Cross agency referral capability – Nellbooker

Each partner will sign up and actively use Nellbooker the online booking and referral system to facilitate timely and accurate cross agency referrals thus improving the journey of the client.

▪ Common Client Monitoring

Funded agencies must be able to provide the council with regular information relating to client numbers, outcomes, equal opportunities etc. Information must be provided on time and in a form that is complete, clear and accurate. This requirement is essential to the whole process. The common counting system ensures that all data reported will link to show a true picture of need and delivery across Rotherham

▪ Minimum threshold for Quality Assurance

A minimum threshold for quality assurance is required – all agencies to be members of a recognised quality assurance system.

▪ Addressing disadvantage

Contracted agencies must be concerned with addressing disadvantage. Primarily this will be achieved by offering advice services targeted at those in most need. It will also encompass 'social added value' by, for example, developing and training volunteers

who are disadvantaged within the labour market so that, in the process of inputting their free time, they can improve their skills and employability.

▪ **Area of operation**

Prospective members must be operating in Rotherham - the organisation must have a base located in the borough.

7.3 Advocacy Services

Members are asked to approve a grant of £9,821 to Giving Real Opportunities to Women (GROW) to enable the organisation to support the Council and Rotherham Partnership implement the Rotherham Women's Strategy and associated activity including the continued development of Rotherham Women's Network.

8. Finance

As section 7 above.

9. Risks and Uncertainties

There will always be some risk associated with contracting with external organisations; this will continue to be managed through stronger commissioning, service level agreements and monitoring systems within the financial regulations of the authority.

10. Policy and Performance Agenda Implications

The Government intends to introduce a range of significant changes to the benefits system as part of its Welfare Reform programme which is primarily based around incentivising work take-up.

The reform proposals have the following objectives:

- Reduce the cost of the welfare benefits to the public purse;
- Improve work incentives by 'making work pay';
- Reduce welfare dependency;
- Reduce the complexity of the benefits system by simplifying the whole system of benefits and tax credits to create a "Universal Credit" for people of working age.

These reforms will have significant impacts on the citizens and communities in Rotherham and in turn economic impacts. Government expects to save £18bn with the implementation of the reforms to the welfare system over the life of parliament. An analysis undertaken by Rotherham Partnership on the proposed changes to the benefits system and their potential impact has concluded that the changes to the benefits systems alone suggest a loss of nearly £28m to the local economy by the end of March 2015. However it is recognised that the actual amount of lost benefit income is likely to be higher than this due to the fact that data is not currently available to estimate the monetary impact of some of the changes. This is a 'best case' scenario. It is possible that some people currently on incapacity benefit could move onto either Job Seeker's Allowance or no benefits at all which could double the loss in benefit income.

11. Background Papers

Minutes and reports to Cabinet Member (Communities and Inclusion) 8th March 2010.

Minutes and reports to Cabinet Member (Community Development, Equalities, and Young Peoples issues) 14th March 2011

Minutes and reports to Cabinet Member (Community Development, Equalities, and Young Peoples issues) 16th April 2012

12. Contact Name:

Zafar Saleem, Community Engagement and Cohesion Manager, Resources Directorate, ext 2757. zafar.saleem@rotherham.gov.uk