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| Subject: | Partnership Agreements 24/25 |
| Date: | 12 th March 2024 |
| Reporting Officer: | David Sales, Director of Neighbourhood Services |
| Contact Officer: | Nicola Lane, Neighbourhood Services Manager Margaret Higgins, Lead Officer Community Provision Cormac McCann, Lead Officer, Community Provision |

Is this report restricted? Yes No

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

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| After Committee Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| After Council Decision | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sometime in the future | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Never | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Is this report eligible for call in? Yes No

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| 1.0 | Purpose of Report or Summary of main Issues |
| 1.1 | The purpose of this report is to advise members of the existing Partnership Agreements that are in place to deliver services aligned to Neighbourhood Services activity. Members are asked to approve future funding to continue these partnership agreements in 24/25. |

| | This report also advises members of a request from Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC) that Belfast City Council (BCC) applies an inflationary award to the funding that it provides to Belfast Healthy Cities for the remaining term of their funding agreement, years 24/25 and 25/26. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| 2.0 | Recommendations | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2.1 | <p>It is recommended that Committee;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree to continue funding to each of the partners at the same level for the 24/25 financial year (£261,359) • Note that council is not in a position to provide an inflationary award to Belfast Healthy Cities due to the precedent that this would set for other funding agreements and the lack of available budget. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.0 | Main report | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | <u>Background</u> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Members are aware that City & Neighbourhood Services work in partnership with a number of organisations that share common strategic objectives and that some of this work is supported through annual funding agreements to deliver against agreed outcomes. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.2 | <p>In 2021/22, an extensive review of the first six Partnership Agreements listed below was completed; the review concluded that the agreements provided strategic alignment, added value to the Council/City and were value for money. In line with these findings, council agreed that these partnership funding arrangements should continue at the same level to deliver services in 22/23 and 23/24.</p> <p>At the start of 2023, a desktop review of the last two agreements listed below, which were not part of the original review, was also carried out. It was agreed that these 2 funded programmes should be considered as part of the overall departmental partnership arrangements and have therefore been included in this paper for consideration.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Project</th> <th>Funding</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Belfast Hills Partnership</td> <td>£36,900</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Lagan Valley Regional Park</td> <td>£88,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Outdoor Recreation NI (promotion of mountain bike trails)</td> <td>£5,250</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Keep NI Beautiful (Live Here Love Here and Eco Schools Project)</td> <td>£55,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Mary Peters Trust</td> <td>£5,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Bryson Energy (previously Play Resource)*</td> <td>£31,209</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Belfast Mela</td> <td>£20,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Belfast International Arts Festival</td> <td>£20,000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>TOTAL</td> <td>£261,359</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>* Note – Play Resource Warehouse has merged with Bryson Energy.</p> | Project | Funding | Belfast Hills Partnership | £36,900 | Lagan Valley Regional Park | £88,000 | Outdoor Recreation NI (promotion of mountain bike trails) | £5,250 | Keep NI Beautiful (Live Here Love Here and Eco Schools Project) | £55,000 | Mary Peters Trust | £5,000 | Bryson Energy (previously Play Resource)* | £31,209 | Belfast Mela | £20,000 | Belfast International Arts Festival | £20,000 | TOTAL | £261,359 |
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| TOTAL | £261,359 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3.3 | <p><u>Request from Belfast Healthy Cities for inflationary award</u></p> <p>Belfast’s membership to the WHO European Healthy Cities Network is facilitated by Belfast Healthy Cities (BHC), an independent partnership organisation. In May 2021, the City of Belfast was successful in its application to re-designate as a WHO Healthy City and participate in the WHO European Healthy Cities Network until April 2026.</p> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

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| | <p>On 10th January 22024, BHC contacted council officers to request that they bring a request for an increased inflation cost to the People and Communities Committee.</p> <p>The request outlines that Belfast City Council has funded Belfast Healthy Cities since its establishment in 1998 and that the Board of Directors are very grateful for this financial contribution. BHC highlight that Belfast City Council reduced their funding to Belfast Healthy Cities at a special meeting in January 2017, from £89,586 to £81,294 per annum, to below the 2009/2010 funding level. Funding has remained at this level since 2017. Belfast Healthy Cities view that this; <i>'is in essence an ongoing decrease in funding – given the ongoing challenges of inflation. It would be important to relay this to the Committee, given the number of new Committee members who may not be aware of this position.</i></p> <p>The request from BHC also advises that the three other core funders have increased their funding this year by over 3.5 % which 'takes into account the increase in National Living Wage of 10.3%, non-pay at 3%, and the reversal of the 2022/23 increase in Employers' National Insurance of 1.25%'. </p> <p>Members should note that Council does not have a policy to provide annual increments to multi annual funding awards. C&NS and council generally have a number of multi annual funding agreements which do not include a mechanism to provide an annual enhancement. To provide an increment to one award would have implications for all funding awards and there is no available budget to resource this. In addition, the Partnership Agreements outlined in this paper do not receive an annual increment.</p> <p><u>Financial implications</u></p> <p>The total financial allocation to these partner funding arrangements is £261,359. These budgets have been agreed as part of rate setting for 24/25.</p> <p>A 3.5% increase to the current Belfast Healthy Cities funding award would be £2,845. Council are one of four core funders to Belfast Healthy Cities, along with the Public Health Agency (PHA), Belfast Health and Social Care Trust (BHSCT) and Northern Ireland Housing Executive (NIHE). Annual funding amounts to over 300k of which BCC contributes £81,294 per annum until March 26. There is no current budget to provide this increment.</p> <p>Members may wish to note that through the CSP council provides £4,277,766 in annual funding to support multi annual funding awards. Members will be aware that at last month's meeting the Belfast Advice Group asked Council to consider a 3% annual increment to their funding, which would cost approximately £30,000 p.a. Applying an annual increment of 3.5% to the other multi annual awards supported through the CSP (Capacity and Revenue) would require a budget of £114, 734 p.a. The Partnership Agreements covered by this paper do not receive an annual increment. To apply a 3.5% uplift would cost £9,148 p.a</p> <p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications and Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>Council does not have a policy on implementing annual inflationary increases to funding agreements. A decision to introduce an increase for one funding agreement could set a precedent and have an impact on other funding awards.</p> |
| 4.0 | Appendices – Documents Attached |
| 4.1 | N/A |