

## **CABINET - 21 JANUARY 2020**

### **Innovation & Sustainability Funds for Daytime Support**

Report by Benedict Leigh, Deputy Director, Commissioning

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

**Cabinet is RECOMMENDED to:**

- (a) approve the recommendations, as set out under 28 (a-b);**
- (b) approve the recommendation to transfer £40,138 from the Innovation Fund 2020/21 to the Sustainability Fund 2020/21, to cover the extra funding awarded, as set out under 28(c);**
- (c) to carry forward the remaining balance of £39,430 from the Innovation Fund 2020/21 to the Innovation Fund 2021/22, as set out under 28 (d).**

#### **Executive Summary**

1. The Innovation and Sustainability Funds were introduced in 2018, following the review of daytime support services and the implementation of a new, flexible countywide system of daytime support in Oxfordshire.
2. It was agreed at Cabinet on 19 March 2019 that a review of the Innovation and Sustainability Funds should take place. Information gathered from the review enabled us to make recommendations to improve grant applications, guidelines and the award selection and decision-making processes. These recommendations were presented and approved at Cabinet on 16 July 2019.
3. This round of applications to the Innovation and Sustainability Funds opened on 12 August 2019 and the closing date for both funds was originally 20 September 2019. However, an unprecedented number of requests to extend the deadline resulted in an extension of the closing date to 30 September 2019.
4. The Sustainability Fund for 2020/21 is £250,000 and we received 38 applications to this fund, requesting an overall amount of £370,634.30, with 30 applicants requesting funding over the 3-year period.
5. The Innovation Fund for 2020/21 is £123,265, and we received 5 applications to this fund, requesting an overall amount of £63,097.00.
6. The strategic plan is to move towards a rolling three-year programme of awards for the Sustainability Fund, whereby a third of the available funding is awarded each year to applicants requesting funding over a three-year period.

## Background

7. In 2017 the Council developed a sustainable model for delivering daytime support to meet people's needs now and in the future. This includes: supporting people to live well in their communities; providing some additional tailored support to people who need this; and ensuring that a range of options are available for people with more complex needs to choose from, using their personal budgets or own resources.
8. There remained a need to continue to support people to live well in their local community, taking part in a range of locally available opportunities. Our aim was to reduce loneliness and social isolation by supporting individuals and communities to support each other.
9. Oxfordshire's voluntary sector delivers excellent support to many vulnerable people; and the majority do so without funding from Oxfordshire County Council. As part of the outcomes from the daytime support review, the Council introduced Voluntary Sector Funding. The January 2017 Cabinet report included the below table, showing budgeted funding for the Innovation and Sustainability Funds:

Service	17/18	18/19	19/20
Voluntary Sector Funding (April – August 2017)	£0.573m	-	-
Sustainability Fund (Voluntary Sector funding)	-	£0.250m	£0.250m
Innovation Fund (Voluntary Sector Funding)	£0.100m	£0.100m	£0.100m
Specialist training & support (dementia & autism)	£0.025m	£0.025m	£0.025m
Community Information Network	£0.250m	£0.250m	£0.250m

- The **Sustainability Fund**, £250,000 per year, to provide grants to enable the ongoing delivery of daytime support services in areas of high need. The fund was open to all voluntary and community groups supporting people in Oxfordshire.
- The **Innovation Fund**, £100,000 per year, to provide one-off grant funding to establish self-sustaining projects to fill gaps in services and broaden the current offer. The fund was open to all voluntary and community groups supporting people in Oxfordshire.
- Alongside these funds, there was a further £250,000 available in the **Transition Fund** for 2018/19. This enabled additional support to assist services towards sustainability in 2017/18.

## **Innovation and Sustainability Funds review 2019**

10. It was agreed by Cabinet on 19 March 2019 that a review should take place for successful applicants to establish success rates and where smaller amounts are awarded, any implications to the projects.
11. In April and May 2019, we reviewed the Innovation and Sustainability Funds process, application forms and guidance & criteria, with the involvement, support and co-design of people across Oxfordshire. This included service users, carers, support workers, service providers and organisations with an interest or connection to daytime support services.
12. We sought feedback and suggestions from the cross-party panel participants and representatives from internal teams involved in the Innovation and Sustainability Funds process.
13. The third round of the Innovation Fund 2019/20 was oversubscribed and resulted in a decision to award 60% of the requested amounts to all applicants except for one bid, where costs were item specific and a one-off amount. Feedback from this cohort indicated that offering a percentage had not been a viable option for three of the successful applicants, and they declined the awarded amounts, totalling an amount of £23,265. Several other applicants did accept the reduced amounts, but they had to revise their offer, which resulted in a scaled down version of the original idea being offered throughout the funding period.
14. Final recommendations on how we could improve the process, simplify and re-word the application forms and streamline specific tasks were presented to Cabinet on 16 July 2019 for their final decision. All recommendations were agreed by Cabinet.

## **Outcomes from the Innovation & Sustainability Funds review**

15. To introduce the option to apply for funding over a 3-year period for the Sustainability Fund applicants, phased in over a 3-year period and in due course replacing the 1-year period. This option has been implemented for the Sustainability Fund 2020/21 applicants.
16. People had requested a workshop where they could discuss the grant criteria in more detail and look at examples of a 3-year business plan. We arranged two workshops, in partnership with Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action, and held them at the beginning of September 2019. Both workshops proved very popular, with people expressing how helpful and informative the workshops have been.
17. Cabinet agreed on 16 July 2019 that we could reallocate £23,265 from the Innovation Fund 2019/20, previously awarded and declined, to the next round of the Innovation Fund.

## **Process**

18. The Innovation and Sustainability Funds opened for applications on 12 August 2019 and the closing date for both funds was 20 September 2019. We received an unprecedented number of requests to extend the deadline this time, which resulted in an extension date to 30 September 2019.
19. Officers used a pre-scoring process for all applications, which included checking that each application met the grant criteria, collating background information and providing an accreditation check. This information was used to produce a summary sheet for each application, which was shared with all representatives at the cross-party panel, forming part of a synopsis and easy to read document. This was used alongside the application form and any other supporting documents.
20. Applications to the Innovation Fund were shared with a representative from the Innovation Team to ensure that we (OCC) were not duplicating projects and funding.
21. Cross party panel meetings comprised of Cllr Lawrie Stratford, Cllr Mark Gray, Cllr Sobia Afridi and Cllr Richard Webber, as well as representation from people using services, and were held on 8 and 10 October 2019 to evaluate applications and make recommendations to Cabinet for award. The cross-party panel assessed all applications to the Innovation and Sustainability Funds against the criteria outlined in the guidance notes at Annex 1.
22. Applicants, along with their local county councillor, will be notified by e-mail of the Cabinet decision. Applicants will be notified of the decision by the end of January 2020.

## **Budgets and Applications**

23. Funding of £250,000 per annum is available through the Sustainability Fund from 2020/21 to 2022/23. We received 38 applications to this fund, requesting an overall amount of £370,634.30 in 2020/21. 30 applicants applied for funding over the 3-year period with further total requests of £282,499 in 2021/22 and £248,200 in 2022/23.
24. The Innovation Fund totals £123,265 in 2020/21, and we received 5 applications to this fund, requesting an overall amount of £63,097.00 in 2020/21.
25. The individual amounts requested to the Innovation and Sustainability Funds, and the subsequent cross-party panel recommendations can be found at Annex 2 and Annex 3.

## **Recommendations from cross-party panel**

26. The cross-party panel recommendations are:
- a) To award a total of £43,697 from the Innovation Fund in 2020/21. Details can be found at Annex 2.
  - b) To award a total of £290,138 from the Sustainability Fund in 2020/21, £160,545 in 2021/22 and £135,665 in 2022/23. Details can be found at Annex 3.
  - c) To transfer £40,138 from the Innovation Fund 2020/21 to the Sustainability Fund 2020/21, to cover the extra amounts awarded.
  - d) To carry forward the remaining balance of £39,430 from the Innovation Fund 2020/21 to the Innovation Fund 2021/22.

## **Equalities Implications**

27. The equality and inclusion implications of the strategic direction for daytime support and its implementation were set out in the 24 January 2017 Cabinet papers. This included a Service and Community Impact Assessment. These papers are available at Annex 4.
28. Equality and inclusion implications have been considered. The proposal to offer grants to community and voluntary sector services is only thought to confer a benefit on those with a protected characteristic and there is no adverse impact on those individuals.
29. The criteria for grant funding will require services to demonstrate how they meet the 'need' criteria, which are included as Annex 1, which includes consideration of impact. This will also be considered in the decision processes.

## **Climate Implication**

30. As part of the grant review, all applications are now submitted and processed electronically. We have minimised the need to print applications and encouraged the use of electronic access and assessment for those taking participating in the cross-party panel meetings.

## **Risk Management**

31. The risk management implications of the strategic direction for daytime support and its implementation were set out in the 24 January 2017 Cabinet papers. These papers are available on the council website.

## **Communications**

32. The process and criteria for applying to the Innovation and Sustainability Funds has been communicated via the council website as well as through multiple email communications with stakeholders and partners to encourage applications and wider distribution.

- 33. We have publicised good news stories based on several successful applicants from previous rounds of the Innovation and Sustainability Funds.
- 34. All organisations that have submitted applications to the Innovation & Sustainability Funds will be informed of the outcome by email communication on 28 January 2020.

**Key Dates**

- 35. The key date is as follows:

January 28, 2020	Communication to all applicants on final decisions made at Cabinet
April 1, 2020	Allocation of funding

<b>Documents</b>
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- Annex 1 Innovation & Sustainability Fund guidance and criteria
- Annex 2 Innovation Fund requested amounts and recommendations
- Annex 3 Sustainability Fund requested amounts and recommendations
- Annex 4 Cabinet papers 24 January 2017

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