

REPORT TITLE:	CONTRACT AWARD: WIRRAL COUNCIL FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE
REPORT OF:	ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: CONSULTANT IN PUBLIC HEALTH

REPORT SUMMARY

This report seeks approval for the direct award of a contract to Wirral Council for Voluntary Service to deliver a programme of activity to support collaboration between key system partners and the community, voluntary and faith (CVF) sector in Wirral. The contract will enable the supporting of small groups to sustain and grow, neighbourhood working, delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and Volunteering and Community Development.

Wirral CVS is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) established by and for Wirral's CVF Sector. This contract will be a direct award as Wirral CVS is the only organisation in Wirral which has National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) membership.

This proposal will aid delivery of the Wirral Health and Wellbeing 2022-27 strategy to 'Create a culture of health and wellbeing, listening to residents and working together' and will contribute directly or indirectly to delivering the following themes of the Wirral Plan:

- Brighter Futures
- Inclusive Economy
- Safe and Pleasant Communities
- Active and Healthy Lives

This proposal affects all Wards within the borough and the decision is not a key decision.

RECOMMENDATION/S

The Director of Public Health is recommended to make a direct award of a 12 month contract to Wirral Council for Voluntary Service, to deliver the outcomes set out in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7 of this report, of a value of £140,000

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1.1 Wirral is currently the only Local Authority area in the region without any contract to support local CVF sector co-ordination. This poses several risks to the sector and also to the local authority and wider partners. This contract will enable effective engagement across the sector, to bring revenue into the borough, and to support the CVF sector to enable the delivery of key strategic plans. This contract will support the delivery of Wirral Plan, Wirral Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the newly emerging place-based priorities including the developing neighbourhood's programme.
- 1.2 A direct award to Wirral CVS is clearly justified by virtue of its unique position being the only organisation in Wirral which has NAVCA membership, and which will be receiving external grant funding for other related activities via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority.

2.0 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 2.1 Various options were explored including different financial models the option of not providing any additional investment in this contractual arrangement. These options, although considered, are not recommended as this would risk delivery of local strategic priorities. The option of putting this contract out for competitive tender was considered, however Wirral CVS are the only organisation in Wirral which has National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) membership and will be receiving external grant funding for other related activities via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority, therefore this option was discounted.

3.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 3.1 Since January 2020 a series of CVF sector led workshops and programmes of work have taken place with wide sector engagement. These identified a consensus for a new relationship between the CVF and the public sector and determined the following ambitions:
 - The development of an 'Memorandum of Understanding' style agreement between the public sector and the CVF sector.
 - A desire to move towards a collective investment fund to drive outcome led, and collaborative, delivery of services by the sector, on behalf of the council and potentially the wider partnership, moving away from the current procurement model.
 - A need to provide tailored engagement and support to the various components of the diverse CVF sector.
- 3.2 The workshops, working group and engagement with the wider sector has generated the first sector led plan, *Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector Coming Together*, based on the opportunities and challenges facing the sector and the borough. This

was presented to the Health and Wellbeing Board in December 2021 with the following recommendations endorsed by the Board:

- Recognition and endorsement of Wirral CVS is requested of system partners from the CVF Sector
- Endorsement of the CVF Plan and to work together to identify and secure an appropriate level of funding to be allocated
- Commitment to meaningful co-design with the CVF Sector
- A named Senior Lead to act as a champion within every partner organisation to support the above points.

3.3 Any CVF organisation in Wirral can become a member, at no cost, and help shape and drive what the organisation does. The Board of Trustees come from the membership and are elected by members to take responsibility for delivering the sector led strategy. Through this additional investment Wirral CVS is committed to supporting the CVF sector across the following four pillars of activity:

- **Leadership and advocacy** - mobilising and encouraging community action, strengthening our sector's voice and influence on key decision-makers and funders. Supporting community leaders on their journey.
- **Partnerships & collaborations** - creating opportunities and driving effective joint working by building networks of local organisations and strategic partners. Together we can achieve more.
- **Community development** - providing practical support and opportunities for people to develop skills in their local community, so that they can achieve their goals and aspirations. Anything from writing a constitution or setting up a bank account through to bid writing and strategic planning.
- **Volunteering** - building an environment in which volunteers and their communities thrive, by encouraging and nurturing volunteering opportunities.

3.4 The proposal is to make a direct contract award to Wirral CVS as it is the only organisation in Wirral which has National Association for Voluntary and Community Action (NAVCA) membership. NAVCA membership is only granted to one infrastructure body in each council area. NAVCA membership allows Wirral CVS to represent the sector at the Liverpool City Region Voluntary Sector 6 meetings. This allows Wirral CVS to receive vital funding for the benefit of local CVF organisations which otherwise could not have been accessed.

3.5 Wirral CVS has been working with local organisations across the partnership to mobilise and bring the sector together collectively to access funding and build relationships. An example of this is the new Wirral mental health alliance. Wirral CVS brought together over 90 local CVF organisations both big and small to collaborate to access the funding through the alliance, providing valuable access to resources which many organisations may have missed the opportunity to access through a traditional grants programme.

3.6 Under the proposed contract Wirral CVS will deliver a programme of activity over a twelve-month period to co-ordinate and support collaboration between key system partners and the CVF sector in Wirral. This proposal will aid delivery of the Wirral Plan, Wirral Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the newly emerging place-based

priorities including the developing neighbourhood's programme. Wirral CVS will also provide a regular State of the Sector survey to ensure that up-to-date information is available about the breadth of Wirral's CVF sector, its impact, challenges, and opportunities.

3.7 The programme of delivery by Wirral CVS will cover the main themes of:

- Supporting small groups to sustain and grow
- Supporting neighbourhood working
- Supporting the delivery of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Supporting Volunteering and Community Development

A more detailed service specification will be developed outlining key activity and outcomes to be achieved over the 12-month period.

3.8 Wirral CVS is already tasked by the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority through activities funding through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) to develop a volunteering portal and support with volunteering roles as part of two-year programme of work.

4.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 The funding proposed will be funded through the Public Health grant. The value and availability of the Public Health grant for 2023/24 onwards has been recently announced and for 2023/24 provide each Council with a 3.3% cash terms increase. Should the Public Health grant vary and be reduced then contract amounts may need to be reduced or the contract terminated, and provision will therefore need to be made in the contract for such eventuality.

5.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Paragraph 12.4.1 of the Council's Contract Procedure Rules provides for a waiver of the requirement to carry out a competitive tendering exercise where services are obtainable only from one source or contractor and there is no reasonably satisfactory alternative. Wirral CVS is the only organisation in Wirral which has NAVCA membership and will be receiving external grant funding for other related activities via the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority. The basis for making a direct award is therefore clearly established in these circumstances.

6.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: STAFFING, ICT AND ASSETS

6.1 There are no staffing implications for the Council arising out of the recommendations set out in this report.

7.0 RELEVANT RISKS

7.1 Any reduction in the level of Public Health Grant funding used to enable the Council to pay for this contract or a change in priorities identified in relation to the associated grant conditions, may result in necessary action to reduce the amount of services obtained by the Council under the proposed contract.

8.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

8.1 The Services described within this report are designed based on and respond to findings from a range of insight, including research conducted with local communities throughout the last year and through working with the Community, Voluntary and faith sector forum, and wider Community, Voluntary and Faith Sector in Wirral.

9.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Wirral Council has a legal requirement to make sure its policies, and the way it carries out its work, do not discriminate against anyone. An Equality Impact Assessment is a tool to help council services identify steps they can take to ensure equality for anyone who might be affected by a particular policy, decision, or activity.

9.2 The Equality Impact Assessment for these decisions can be found <https://www.wirral.gov.uk/communities-and-neighbourhoods/equality-impact-assessments/equality-impact-assessments-january-202-6>

10.0 ENVIRONMENT AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

10.1 Through providing support for residents related to energy usage and fuel poverty the support provided by this service is anticipated to have a positive impact on greenhouse gas emissions.

11.0 COMMUNITY WEALTH IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The activities to be undertaken under the proposed contract will improve the health and social outcomes of some of the borough's most vulnerable residents. This will allow trusted, third sector organisations to increase the capacity of their services and support those communities most in need.

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APPENDICES

N/A

BACKGROUND PAPERS

Wirral CVF Coming Together Plan
<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fhealthwatchwirral.co.uk%2Fwp-content%2Fuploads%2F2022%2F05%2FCVF-Coming-Together-Plan-V3.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
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Health and Wellbeing Board	15 th June 2022
Health and Wellbeing Board	15 th December 2021
Health and Wellbeing Board	29 th September 2021
Health and Wellbeing Board	20 th July 2021
Health and Wellbeing Board	31 st March 2021