

Report To: Charity Committee

Date of Meeting: 14th March 2022

Report Title: Appendix 2 - Progress Report – “Golden Thread” Activity

Report By: Steve Manwaring (HVA)

Key Decision: Yes

Classification:

Purpose of Report

As part of its Large Grants Programme (LGP) the Foreshore Trust allocated an additional £20,000 pa over 2 years related to the theme of Mental Health. Facilitated by Hastings Voluntary Action (HVA), recipients of the LGP attended a series of meetings to work collaboratively and develop a project or initiative for funding from April 2022. This report outlines that proposal and summarises the comments of the Grants Advisory Panel which considered this report at its meeting of 26th January 2022.

Recommendation(s)

1. Members are asked to
 - a) note the comments of the Grants Advisory Panel who considered this application at their meeting of 26th January 2022
 - b) Consider the proposal in light of those comments
 - c) If approved, delegate to the assistant director, regeneration and culture, or her nominee, in consultation with the chair of the charity committee to develop and enter into a contractual and monitoring framework with Hastings Voluntary Action to enable the activity to commence April 2022

Reasons for Recommendations

1. The recommendations enable the Charity Committee to commission activity to commence in April 2022 enabling the final large grant to be given and its ambition to enable local service delivery organisations to respond to clients with Mental Health issues to be fulfilled.

Introduction

1. When the first allocations of the Foreshore Trust large grants programme were made members of the Charity Committee expressed a wish to resource an extra grant around the theme of Mental Health – “the Golden Thread” (recognising this as a significant local issue which was likely to become more acute as a result of COVID)
2. In their role as the VCSE infrastructure organisation Hastings Voluntary Action (HVA) was requested to convene and facilitate discussions with Large Grant Recipients to: explore
 - a. Examine the type of Mental Health issues being experienced by clients and the impact this was having on local services
 - b. Reach a consensus around specific themes and develop/ interventions
3. To enable more specific input from a mental health perspective HVA have also involved the local officer from MIND to act as a resource to the discussions and offer input as initial themes emerge.

Progress

4. The facilitated discussions agreed that mental health was an issue impacting on the work of all FT LGP recipients and the recent period had seen an increase in both frequency of presentation and complexity of need as a result of COVID 19/lockdown and a period where there was more restricted access to services.
5. 3 key themes emerged from these discussions:
 - A programme of training and workforce development to build organisational resilience and understanding about supporting clients with mental health issues
 - Additional capacity and advice to enable support to be provided to those with mental health issues who are digitally excluded
 - Facilitated learning opportunities for VCSE leaders to develop collaborative responses to emerging issues around Mental Health and strengthen referral links between organisations.

Proposed Activity

The proposed activity and costs to deliver against the agreed themes is as follows:

Training and workforce development

It was agreed by workshop participants that creating and delivering a framework for workforce development was the most likely way of building long term resilience across organisations as well as creating structured opportunities for staff and volunteers to receive specialist training. For this reason it was agreed that this theme should be the subject of the largest investment. Participants agreed the following framework as the basis for this activity:

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID (MHFA 2 DAY)

This two-day course gives delegates the skills to be mental health first aiders. Delegates will get a deep understanding of what mental health is and what factors can affect wellbeing.

The course teaches delegates practical skills to spot the signs of mental illness and gives them the confidence to step in and support a person who needs assistance.

- Numbers limited to 16 people per course so that the instructor can keep people safe and supported while they learn
- Through a mix of group activities, presentations and discussions, each session is built around a Mental Health First Aid action plan
- Everyone who completes the course gets an MHFA manual to keep and refer to whenever they need it, and a certificate to say they are a Mental Health First Aider.

Proposed Learning outcomes

- An in-depth understanding of mental health and the factors that can affect wellbeing.
- Practical skills to spot the triggers and signs of mental health issues.
- Confidence to step in, reassure and support a person in distress.
- The understanding and awareness to evaluate, 'triage' and identify circumstances when a client may need more specialist or in-depth support/referral or have needs which cannot be met at that point.
- Enhanced interpersonal skills such as non-judgemental listening.
- Knowledge to help someone recover their health by guiding them to further support – whether that's self-help resources, through their employer, the NHS, or a mix.

ACAS Training for the Development of Positive Mental health in the Workplace

Training for organisations in the development of Positive Mental Health in the Workplace.

A 2 day opportunity for organisations to assess, develop and review a specific plan against the ACAS Positive Mental Health in the Workplace framework.

Specific Organisational training

A £500 allocation to each organisation to develop a training opportunity unique to their own organisation.

4 x Mental Health First Aid Training for 64 Participants	£8,000
2 x ACAS framework Training days for organisation leaders and managers 16 participants	£1,600
Bespoke training allocation	£4,000
Total	£13,600

Additional capacity and advice to enable support to be provided to those with Mental health issues who are digitally excluded

Large Grant Recipients noted that increasingly services were being offered online and those with mental health issues featured among those who experience digital exclusion. We have identified that clients need help to connect to essential government services to improve their financial position, mental and physical health.

CA 1066 and Seaview staff will offer support to large grant recipients in identifying clients who are digitally excluded, assessing digital capability and supporting referrals into a service providing specialist 1-2-1 digital skills coaching, support and advice on further training and online services.

Digital coach 3 hours/week	£2,200
Service co-ordination and monitoring	£1,200

An action learning set for Large Grant Recipients

Although the meeting of Large Grant Recipients was convened for a specific purpose the value of exploring trends and issues and how they could be responded to was agreed. For this reason it was agreed that a small resource could be deployed to enable an Action Learning Set to be convened and independently facilitated on a quarterly basis.

4 x facilitation and write up of sessions + follow up	£1,000
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The proposed activities together with cost relating to monitoring and evaluation are set out below:

Activity	Cost
Training	£13,600
Specialist advice costs - Digital Inclusion activity	£3,400
Facilitation costs	£1,000
Monitoring reporting evaluation and project management	£2,000
Total Year 1 costs	£20,000

Lead Organisation

One of the requests from the large grant recipients in this work development was that a Lead Organisation be identified to hold the contract with the Foreshore Trust and take responsibility for the delivery of the programme together with the submission of monitoring reports. By consensus Hastings Voluntary Action have been identified and are agreeable to fulfilling that role.

Grants Advisory Panel

This initiative was considered by the Grants Advisory Panel at their meeting of 26th January 2022 who received this report and a presentation from Hastings Voluntary Action and had an opportunity to comment and ask questions about the proposed intervention. The Grants Advisory Panel were impressed with this report and happy to recommend HVA's proposal to the charity committee.

Year 2 Activity

Members will recall that the “Golden Thread” activity was envisaged to run for a 2 year period so as to achieve maximum impact. At the request of the group it is recommended that a review take place after Year 1 in order to:

Review participant and programme evaluation
Capture and use the learning to inform future activity

Whilst it is not anticipated that the themes will change it is felt that taking this approach will enable some flex, enable other priorities to be considered or to adjust the investment between priorities.

Next Steps

6. Assuming that the recommendations in this report are approved, Members are requested to delegate to officers the authority to agree contracts with Hastings Voluntary Action so that activity can commence in April 2022.
7. The participants to this process recognise and welcome the opportunity the “golden thread activity” presents to strengthen delivery and collaboration in the area of Mental health. It is recognised that it is important to capture the learning from this process and potentially explore this as a model which could be used more widely. With this in mind at an appropriate stage a feedback presentation to the Charity Committee on the “Golden Thread” can be arranged.
8. From a procurement prospective it is confirmed that work would be delivered by existing LGP recipients or commissioned by them. Because of this it is confirmed that an open call procurement exercise will not be undertaken given that the FT expressly requested that existing grant recipients work together on this project and a Lead Organisation has been agreed by this group.

Wards Affected

All

Policy Implications

Reading Ease Score:

Please identify if this report contains any implications for the following:

Equalities and Community Cohesiveness	Y/N
Crime and Fear of Crime (Section 17)	Y/N
Risk Management	Y/N
Environmental Issues & Climate Change	Y/N
Economic/Financial Implications	Y/N
Human Rights Act	Y/N
Organisational Consequences	Y/N
Local People's Views	Y/N
Anti-Poverty	Y/N
Legal	Y/N

Additional Information

None

Officer to Contact

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