

## **MEDIUM-TERM FINANCIAL PLAN** **SAVING PROPOSAL ASSESSMENT**

**DIRECTORATE:** Corporate Services

**SERVICE AREA:** Service Improvement and Partnerships

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### **1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

**SAVING PROPOSAL TITLE:** **CSP19** Remove the Community Empowerment Fund budget

**BUDGET AREA:** Policy and Partnerships

**TOTAL BUDGET FOR THIS AREA:** £358K

**% OF TOTAL BUDGET IN SAVINGS PROPOSAL:** 30%

**TOTAL SAVING:** £108K

**Please provide a brief description of how the saving will be achieved:** The saving will be achieved by reduction of the Community Empowerment Fund to a budget of £250k, a 30% cut in the total budget.

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### **2. PUBLIC IMPACT ANALYSIS**

**PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING COULD IMPACT UPON THE PUBLIC:**

Consider the 5 ways of working, in particular, *long-term* implications for future generations and *preventative services*. Recognising that savings now may be needed to secure future provision, or may secure provision in another area.

**Long-term guidance:** Consider the importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long-term needs.

The budget was created in the 2021/22 financial year. The intention of the fund is to provide grant funding to community-based organisations in elected member's ward areas. The budget has been in place for less than two full financial years and so the long-term impacts are difficult to assess based on the historic use of the grant. Grant recipients have, in the main, been long-standing community-based organisations and a few newly created community groups.

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**Prevention guidance:** Consider whether the proposed saving is affecting a preventative area that reduces future burdens and supports well-being.

The budget is intended to provide additional funding to small community groups. The aim of the fund is to support community well-being and enable communities to meet the needs of their residents. It is an 'additionality' fund and while some projects may be dealing with preventative issues the majority are promoting greater/enhanced well-being and community engagement.

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**DOES THE PROPOSAL HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO IMPACT MORE GREATLY ON PEOPLE WITH PROTECTED CHARACTERISTICS?** (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation)

\* Yes ☒ Potentially No ☐

**DOES THE PROPOSAL IMPACT ON PEOPLE WHO FACE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE?** (low income/income poverty, low wealth/or no wealth, material deprivation, area deprivation, socio-economic background, cumulative impact – information on [Policy Portal](#))

\* Yes ☒ Potentially No ☐

**DOES THE PROPOSAL HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE WELSH LANGUAGE?** (opportunities to use the language, promote the language and/or treating the Welsh language less favourably than the English language)

\* Yes ☒ Potentially No ☐

**NB \*** If **YES** to any of the above, please complete an [Integrated Impact Assessment](#) (IIA). For further advice and guidance please see the [Policy Portal](#). A Saving Proposal Template or an IIA, if relevant, must be submitted to be included as hyperlinks to all decision reports related to the proposed savings. IIAs are not required for nil impact proposals.

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**PLEASE DETAIL ANY CONSULTATION THAT HAS BEEN UNDERTAKEN IN CONSIDERING THIS PROPOSAL.** Summarise any feedback received.

Consider the 5 ways of working, in particular, *involvement*.

**Involvement:** Consider whether you have involved people who have an interest in the service area, including service users and potential service users.

Few respondents considered the proposed cut to be one of their top three areas to either agree or disagree with. Of those that did respond the majority disagreed that this budget should be cut. However, for the face-to-face engagement respondents particularly disagreed with any drop in the level of support to the community and voluntary sector, further people commented that the grant has not yet had a chance to become established. Local authority elected members voiced similar concerns through a number of forums and groups with strong views expressed that the proposal should be reconsidered.

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**IS FURTHER CONSULTATION REQUIRED BEFORE THIS PROPOSAL CAN BE IMPLEMENTED?**

Yes ☐ No ☒

**NB\*** Please seek guidance from Corporate Policy, who can advise on whether a formal consultation is required and adherence to the Gunning Principles.

**TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE ABOVE AND THE IMPACT RATING DEFINITIONS, PLEASE INDICATE THE PUBLIC IMPACT RATING APPLICABLE TO THIS SAVING PROPOSAL (please tick):**

Nil ☐ Minor ☒ Moderate ☐ Significant ☐ Critical ☐

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**3. ORGANISATION IMPACT ANALYSIS**

**PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING COULD IMPACT UPON THE ORGANISATION:**

Limited organisational impact as this is an external fund.

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**PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING WILL IMPACT UPON MEMBERS OF STAFF:**

No impact on staff.

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**NUMBER OF FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) STAFF IN BUDGET AREA AFFECTED:**

**NUMBER OF POSTS AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED SAVING:** None.

**PLEASE SPECIFY HOW THIS WILL BE MANAGED:**

**HOW MANY POST(S) .....**(please state)

- ALREADY VACANT:
- VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE:
- RETIREMENT:
- REDEPLOYMENT:
- REDUNDANCY:

**PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS OF WHEN THIS WILL BE IMPLEMENTED:**

NA

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**WILL THE PROPOSED SAVING HAVE AN IMPACT ON ANOTHER DIRECTORATE, SERVICE AREA OR TEAM WITHIN THE COUNCIL? (please tick)**

Yes ☐ No ☒

**WILL THE PROPOSED SAVING HAVE AN IMPACT ON ANOTHER PUBLIC SECTOR PARTNER, OR VOLUNTARY SECTOR PARTNER?** (please tick)

Yes ☒ No ☐

If **yes**, please consider the 5 ways of working, in particular *integration*.

**DESCRIBE:**

- THE AREA(S) AFFECTED; AND
- HOW THE PROPOSED SAVING WILL IMPACT

**Integration guidance:** Consider how the proposal will impact on other service areas, or partners, and their ability to meet their objectives.

A reduction in the Community Empowerment Fund will have some impact on the ability of the community and voluntary sector to deliver programmes and projects. However, the original budget proposal was deletion of the budget. In response to consultation the new proposal is a reduction in the budget for the 2023/2024 financial year of approximately 30%.

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**HAVE ANY OPTIONS BEEN CONSIDERED TO MITIGATE ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT?**

**PLEASE PROVIDE DETAILS OF ANY MITIGATION** (e.g. gradual reduction in service, income generation, transferrable skills of staff, commercialisation of the service etc.)

In addition, consider the 5 ways of working, in particular, acting in *collaboration* with other service areas or partners.

The Community Empowerment Fund is a relatively new budget and therefore the additionality it has provided over the past 18 months has had a limited time to make an impact in communities. Other community and voluntary sector funding will continue to support the sector e.g. the Welsh Church Act Fund which is provided by external investment funding, and the Grants To The Voluntary Sector budget, which also provides small grants to community organisations, are not proposed to be cut in the coming financial year.

The Council will continue to work in partnership with the Gwent Voluntary Associations Organisation (GAVO) to support the third sector through various mechanisms: via the Gwent Public Services Board, the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee, and the forthcoming Gwent Third Sector Partnership Agreement.

The new proposal is to reduce the budget to £250K thereby ensuring that a budget remains to support local community groups under the sponsorship of local authority elected members.

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**TAKING ACCOUNT OF THE ABOVE AND THE IMPACT RATING DEFINITIONS, PLEASE INDICATE THE ORGANISATIONAL IMPACT RATING APPLICABLE TO THIS SAVING PROPOSAL (please tick):**

Nil ☐      Minor ☒      Moderate ☐      Significant ☐      Critical ☐

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#### **4. LINKS TO POLICY AND CORPORATE OBJECTIVES**

**DOES THE SAVINGS PROPOSAL LINK TO ANY OF THE FOLLOWING?**

If so, please specify and state what the implication may be.

**POLICY AREA:**

**CORPORATE PLAN and WELL-BEING OBJECTIVES (please state which objectives)**

**WHAT IS THE LINK?** Not linked to the current Well-being Objectives.

**WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT?** NA

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**POLICY AREA:**

**STATUTORY DUTIES (including the requirement to provide services in Welsh)**

**WHAT IS THE LINK?** Not linked to any statutory duties.

**WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT?** NA

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**POLICY AREA:**

**WELSH GOVERNMENT GUIDANCE or STRATEGY**

**WHAT IS THE LINK?** Not linked to Welsh Government Guidance or Strategy.

**WHAT WILL BE THE IMPACT?** NA

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#### **5. OTHER RISK(S) AND SENSITIVITIES**

**HAVE ANY OTHER RISKS BEEN IDENTIFIED IN CONNECTION WITH THIS SAVING PROPOSAL?**

Yes ☐      No ☒

**IF YES, PLEASE SPECIFY BELOW:**

The new proposal is a reduction in the budget rather than deletion and hence the risks and sensitivities are less.

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**PLEASE SPECIFY BELOW ANY OTHER MITIGATION:**

Not all risks can be mitigated. Some may need to be tolerated in the context of budget pressures.

Please see section 3 above in relation to other funding supporting the community and voluntary sector.

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**6. OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION**

**PLEASE USE THIS SECTION TO PROVIDE ANY OTHER RELEVANT INFORMATION WHICH YOU FEEL HAS NOT BEEN CAPTURED.**

None

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**HEAD OF SERVICE:** Sue Richards

**DATE OF COMPLETION:** 14.2.23