

## REPORT TO BANFF AND BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE: 07 SEPTEMBER 2021

### BANFF AND BUCHAN AREA COMMITTEE BUDGET 2021/2022 - AREA INITIATIVES FUND APPLICATION

#### 1 Reason for Report

The purpose of this report is to allow the Committee to make a decision on a potential award of funding from the first tranche of the Banff and Buchan Area Initiatives Fund 2021/2022.

#### 2 Recommendation

**The Area Committee is recommended to:**

**2.1 note the updated position in relation to the information provided at the informal session on 21<sup>st</sup> September 2021 and to determine whether sufficient information has now been provided to enable the award of funding to proceed.**

#### 3 Purpose of Report and Decision Making Route

3.1 The purpose of this report is to seek the agreement of the Banff and Buchan Area Committee in relation to the potential award of £4,964 to the Y Suffer in Silence organisation.

3.2 At the meeting on 15 June 2021, the Acting Area Manager was instructed to provide additional information and clarification on the points below in relation to the Y Suffer in Silence application lodged in the first tranche:

- details of ongoing training and supervision of volunteers and whether this is in-house training or an accredited course with associated outcomes and, if external, confirmation of the awarding organisation and certificates gained.
- details of training in safeguarding clients and whether this is in-house training or an accredited course with associated outcomes and, if external, confirmation of the awarding organisation and certificates gained.
- and to provide the assurance that the standard of care that this Committee requires to protect children and young people can be met.

3.3 Information was provided to Banff & Buchan Area Committee on the 17 August 2021

(<http://committeesinternal.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/committees.aspx?commid=2&meetid=19890>) to try and address these questions, however the Area Committee felt additional information and further reassurances about the organisation position around service delivery and regulation were still required.

The Committee therefore **agreed** that consideration of the application from the Y Suffer in Silence group lodged in the first tranche be deferred to enable more information to be presented.

#### **4. Discussion**

- 4.1 To support the Area Committee an informal meeting took place to enable appropriate officers and a representative from the Y Suffer in Silence organisation to have a full discussion about the issues raised in the reports of June and August. Unfortunately, the representative from Y Suffer in Silence did not take up the offer to attend despite a number of attempts to extend this invitation by email and telephone.
- 4.2 The informal session reflected on the outstanding questions, and the criteria of the grant, as well as the requirements for all charities to be open, transparent and regulated to allow Elected Members to allocate public money with clear and balanced reassurance that a service is provided in and for the benefit of the community.
- 4.3 In order to reach a decision, the Members agreed that it was vital in considering funding for a service being delivered by a charity working with vulnerable individuals, that due diligence was required in relation to evidence-based safeguarding practice and knowledge. Points discussed at the informal session included ensuring due diligence around:
- appropriate Disclosure Scotland/PVG applications,
  - volunteers and paid staff with the right knowledge and skills, and that this can be verified, particularly in relation to wellbeing and mental health;
  - recognisable, verified safeguarding training, and,
  - the professionalism and community benefit offered.
- 4.4 In light of the above discussion, and, with no additional information being available from The Tavistock Institute, or Y Suffer in Silence, the position remains the same in that the Committee may not be sufficiently reassured in relation to the due diligence requirements or be in a position to allocate the funding.

#### **5 Council Priorities, Implications and Risk**

- 5.1 The project, if supported may help to deliver the following Council Priorities:

<b>Pillar</b>	<b>Priority</b>
Our People	Health and Wellbeing
Our Environment	Resilient Communities

5.2 The table below shows whether risks and implications apply if the recommendations are agreed.

<b>Subject</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>No</b>	<b>N/A</b>
Financial	X		
Staffing		X	
Equalities	X		
Fairer Scotland Duty	X		
Town Centre First			X
Sustainability		X	
Children and Young People's Rights and Wellbeing		X	

5.3 An integrated impact assessment is not required because an equality impact assessment was already carried out as part of the development of the proposals set out above and was circulated with the report for the first tranche of applications.

<http://committeesinternal.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/committees.aspx?commid=2&meetid=19888>

The Committee had previously expressed their concern regarding the wellbeing of children and young persons, and vulnerable persons within the community and formed part of their reasons for deferring consideration of the application and the request for further information to be provided. As indicated earlier in the report, no further information has been provided by the applicant.

5.4 There are no additional staffing or financial implications arising from this report. The management of the budget is undertaken within existing Area Management resources. The proposal in this report is in line with the allocation of financial resources as contained in the 2021/2022 Revenue Budget.

5.5 The following risks have been identified as relevant to this matter on a Corporate Level:

- Budget Pressures;
- Working with Other Organisations (see Corporate Risk Register).

No risks have been identified as relevant to these matters on a Strategic Level.

## **6. Scheme of Governance**

6.1 The Head of Finance and Monitoring Officer within Business Services have been consulted in the preparation of this report and their comments have been incorporated. They are satisfied that the report complies with the Scheme of Governance and relevant legislation.

6.2 The Committee is able to consider and take a decision on this item in terms of Section B.6.3 of the List of Committee Powers in Part 2A of the Scheme of Governance as it relates to the authorisation of expenditure from the Area Committee Budget.

**LAURENCE FINDLAY**  
**DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION AND CHILDREN'S SERVICES**

Report prepared by Angela Keith, Area Manager  
21 September 2021