

## **Section 31 local authority grants for additional drug treatment crime and harm reduction activity in 2021/22 – Universal Funding component**

**REPORT TO:** Cllr Caroline Dickinson, Executive Member, Public Health, Prevention and Supported Housing

**DECISION DATE:** 24 March 2021

**SUPPORTING ANNEX;** None

### **PROPOSED RECOMMENDATION**

For the Executive Member, Public Health, Prevention and Supported Housing, in consultation with the relevant Corporate Director and the Corporate Director Strategic Resources to approve the submission of an application to Public Health England for a Section 31

Local Authority grant to expand and strengthen drug treatment crime and harm reduction activity in 2021/22 – Universal Funding component.

### **BACKGROUND TO SUPPORT THE RECOMMENDATION**

North Yorkshire County Council (via the Director of Public Health) received an invitation on 11 March 2021 to submit an application to Public Health England for a Section 31 Local Authority Grant to expand and strengthen drug treatment crime and harm reduction activity in 2021/22 - Universal Funding component.

The invitation is referred to as the 'universal allocation' meaning North Yorkshire County Council is expected to submit an application. The deadline for submission of applications is 26 March 2021.

The evidence base for investment in drug treatment and recovery is strong and shown to be cost effective to the public purse ([Public Health England, 2018](#)).

A multi-agency Partnership Group oversees the strategic approach to substance misuse across North Yorkshire. A range of sub-groups and partnership protocols support co-ordination of intelligence and multi-agency activities to reduce drug related harm. North Yorkshire County Council commissions an adult specialist community drug and alcohol service, with support from the Office for the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, as well as a young people's specialist service.

The Section 31 Grant is for one year and has been made available to assist Local Authorities and partners to strengthen arrangements that support substance-misusing offenders, and arrangements that address drug related deaths. Expenditure must be incurred within one year of receipt of the Grant.

The invitation letter includes a menu of evidence-based interventions. These are pre-agreed and Local Authorities are expected to tailor spend plans in line with these. They are:

- Option 1: System co-ordination and commissioning
- Option 2: Enhanced harm reduction provision
- Option 3: Enhanced treatment capacity
- Option 4: Enhancement of drug treatment pathways for drug misusing offenders
- Option 5: Enhancement of diversion and arrest referral pathways and associated treatment capacity
- Option 6: Enhanced recovery support

The Public Health Team has held planning meetings with a range of partners including the adult specialist community drug and alcohol service, North Yorkshire Police, National Probation Service, Community Rehabilitation Company, Housing Teams in Scarborough and Harrogate and the Office of the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.

Priorities have been agreed and the Public Health Team is continuing to work with partners to develop spend plans in preparation for submission. The Public Health Team is also accessing support from Public Health England. The spend plan currently includes:

- bespoke capacity for service development - e.g. dedicated fixed term strategic posts to lead the development and implementation of bespoke workplans to enhance harm reduction interventions and criminal justice co-ordination arrangements;
- bespoke capacity for intelligence – drug and alcohol related deaths;
- enhanced and bespoke treatment and recovery support – particularly for individuals with substance misuse and co-occurring complex needs and multiple disadvantage

The spend plan will continue to evolve until the Key Decision is considered

Public Health England require a relatively detailed spend plan as part of the application. The timescales for development of the spend plan are extremely tight (2 weeks) given that the Public Health Team and partners continue to be pivotal in addressing and responding to COVID-19 across North Yorkshire. It is expected that expenditure will be incurred within 2021/22. Capacity will be required within North Yorkshire County Council and within partner organisations to develop the necessary agreements to transfer funds to relevant organisations who will lead on aspects of the spend plan. Capacity will also be required within partner organisations to progress spend plans during 2021/22. The Public Health Team is working closely with partners to develop a spend plan that accurately reflects most appropriate use of the additional funding against a backdrop of what is possible in 2021/22. It should however be noted that unforeseeable events may mean that aspects of the spend

plan may not be deliverable, which may lead to re-coup of underspend by Public Health England.

The Grant will devolve to North Yorkshire County Council via a Section 31. North Yorkshire County Council will be required to transfer funds to partners and commissioned services to implement spend plans.

### **LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE COMPLIANCE**

Under the Constitution and Executive Members Scheme of Delegation, the decision to authorise the submission of a bid for grant/other external funding over £100,000 is taken by the individual Executive Member following consultation with the relevant Corporate Director and the Corporate Director Strategic Resources. Para 6 (a) of the Executive Members' Delegation Scheme and Financial Procedure Rule 8 apply.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

To approve North Yorkshire County Council's application to Public Health England for a Section 31 Local Authority grant to expand and strengthen drug treatment crime and harm reduction activity in 2021/22 - Universal Funding component.