

North Yorkshire Council

Assistant Director - Resources

12 January 2025

Request to accept National Lottery Reaching Communities Funding – Swift Project

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To request approval from the Chief Finance Officer, sub-delegated to the Assistant Director – Resources, to accept £425,735 over three years of external grant funding from National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund, in agreement with the Executive Member for Finance and the Executive Member for Corporate Services.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 Authorisation is requested to enable the Council to accept a grant award of £425,735 over three years from the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund to deliver the Swift: Enabling Migrant Communities in North Yorkshire to Thrive project. Whilst Reaching Communities investment has been awarded for £425,735 the total project cost for Swift, including associated match funding contributions is £753,735 over three years.
- 2.2 Swift is an integral part of the work of the Migrant Programmes Team and the wider Localities Service; it is included as part of the Council's Corporate Plan. The project will ensure migrants in North Yorkshire, from refugee, asylum seeking and economic backgrounds, are able to enjoy equitable access to public and voluntary services as well being able to represent themselves and advocate for their own community issues. It will focus on four areas of delivery over three years beginning in April 2025: professional advice and casework, community development, an information and awareness campaign and a Voluntary Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) capacity building programme. It has been developed through an intensive UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) funded grassroots research programme, 'Community Conversations', that engaged with over 140 migrants from across the county from 10 different nationalities. Swift has been developed according to identified migrant community need.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Swift has been developed as an extension to an existing community project, 'Pomoc', which is currently delivered in the Scarborough and Ryedale areas for the benefit of Eastern European Economic Migrants. Pomoc – Access to services for Eastern Europeans is a Council-led project that addresses identified inequalities in access to public and voluntary sector services experienced by Eastern European economic migrants living in the former Scarborough Borough Council (SBC) and Ryedale District. The project also delivers an extensive programme of community engagement and development designed to increase the representation and capacity of Eastern European migrant communities enabling them to play a fuller, more active part in civic and community life.
- 3.2 Pomoc, the Polish word for help, and translatable into most Slavic-based Eastern European languages, emerged through joint research conducted by Scarborough Borough Council and North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) in 2019 that identified three major barriers experienced by Eastern European migrants in accessing services; language, lack of

knowledge and understanding of 'the system' and mistrust. Commissioned to voluntary sector partners to deliver and embrace the principle of employing project workers with identifiable links and background into Eastern European communities (including being fluent in at least one major Eastern European language), the project served to break down these barriers.

- 3.3 As lead partner SBC administered the budget for the project which was sourced primarily through SBC, NYCC and other public sector financial contributions. North Yorkshire Citizens Advice and Law Centre were procured to deliver the project, initially on a pilot basis (July 2020 - December 2021) and subsequently as a full project (January 2022 - present). Internal evaluation of the project, including a social value assessment, identified key achievements and outcomes of the project and recognised the value of its approach in engaging with and developing migrant communities. As such Pomoc is identified as a key legacy project of Local Government Reorganisation and integral to the ongoing development of the Migration Programmes Team and the Council's Localities Service.
- 3.4 The success of Pomoc has led to a strategic desire from the Council to build on its successes and approach and 'roll out' the project to other communities across the geography of North Yorkshire and to other migrant communities for example refugees/ asylum seekers, foreign military communities based in Catterick Garrison. Bridging funding is currently in place through the Council's localities to enable the continuation of the current project until the end of the calendar year and ensure that valuable momentum is not lost, however, external grant funding will be required to continue and extend the project from 2025 onwards.
- 3.5 The newly expanded project is now entitled 'Swift' after the migratory birds that are always welcomed upon their arrival and is a subtle play on words to encourage our migrant communities that we will deal with their issues in a timely manner. The project will focus around interventions in four key areas; professional advice and casework, community development, an information and awareness campaign and a VCSE capacity building programme. Delivery of the project will be achieved through service delivery contracts held with identified local VCSE partners and has recently been awarded National Lottery Reaching Communities funding.

4.0 DETAILED PRESENTATION OF THE SUBSTANTIVE ISSUE

- 4.1 Historical conversations with grants officers at the National Lottery identified a desire from the funders to ensure that they are supporting more projects that target underrepresented and minority groups. Moreover, grants officers from the Lottery had specifically approached the Council with a view to encouraging the Council to submit an application to its Reaching Communities programme. This is unprecedented within the context of Council-led community projects in North Yorkshire.
- 4.2 A Council produced report in January 2024 (The Pomoc Approach – submitted as a supporting document to the previous Stage One Request Report) has outlined the evidence base and rationale for roll out of the Pomoc project to a plurality of geographies across North Yorkshire and to a wider range of migrant populations, for example, refugees and asylum seekers. Headline facts detailed in the report outline that over the past 20 years immigration into North Yorkshire from overseas has doubled from approximately 5% to approximately 10%. Overseas migration into the county is varied, some areas experience very little migration and other have been significantly changed by it. In general terms overseas migration in the south and east of the county (former Selby and Ryedale Districts and Scarborough Borough) tends to be from economic migrants, primarily from the countries of Eastern Europe who came to the UK prior to Brexit. In part this can be attributed to the prevalence of lower-cost private sector rented accommodation in the area and the availability of low and semi-skilled employment. Migration in the west and north of

the county tends to be mainly from those who have arrived in the country through various refugee channels, primarily Ukrainians, Syrians and Afghans. It should also be noted that there is a significant community (10%) of the military community in Catterick Garrison that of Fijian or Nepalese Nationals. Whilst wider community development is understood to be needed.

4.3 The Pomoc Approach report outlined the successes of the project in Scarborough and Ryedale to date. The total outputs of the 2020 - 2021 Pilot are detailed in the table below:

| Output/outcome | Number achieved |
|--|------------------------|
| Residents assisted in applying for Settled/Pre-Settled Status | 375 |
| Eastern European residents assisted in accessing Public/Voluntary Sector provision | 500 |
| Eastern European residents attending community cohesion activities/events | 500 |
| Volunteers recruited onto project | 9 |
| Eastern European community leaders/representatives developed | 7 |
| <i>Social value assessment – £19.78 social value returned on every £1 invested</i> | |

The current, most up to date, outputs of the 2022 - present project are detailed in the table below:

| Output/outcome | Number achieved |
|--|------------------------|
| Residents assisted in applying for Settled/Pre-Settled Status | 1,008 |
| Eastern European residents assisted in accessing Public/Voluntary Sector provision | 305 |
| Eastern European residents attending community cohesion activities/events | 500+ |
| Volunteers recruited onto project | 10 |
| Eastern European community leaders/representatives developed | 10 |
| <i>Social value assessment – £12.57 social value returned on every £1 invested</i> | |

Following internal evaluation of the project, including stated social value return on investment, the decision has been made by the Council's Head of Localities to proceed with the rollout of the project on a county basis. As such Swift is viewed as one of the flagship projects of the new Localities Service and is included on the Council's Corporate Plan.

Between May and September 2024, North Yorkshire Council (NYC), in partnership with nine VCSE partners, delivered a coordinated campaign of community consultation designed to capture the lived experiences and first-hand knowledge of migrants and refugees living in North Yorkshire.

'Community Conversations' engaged over 140 individuals from ten different nationalities living across eleven North Yorkshire areas in informal interviews. Conversations were themed around their experiences of local services and community life in general within their new host communities. The data captured through these conversations has shaped the development of Swift, providing a community-led and focussed context to the project. Headline statements from the Community Conversations include issues around accessing services is primarily an issue for economic migrants and asylum seekers post-positive decision who are not assisted by the 'safety net' of various Government refugee schemes. A substantive call for more community-based and practically based English provision and an overwhelming recognition from all migrant nationalities that integration of communities is absent. On a more worrying note, migrants in the East of the county are reporting significantly higher instances of discrimination and racism than other parts of the county. In response to these, and other, issues the Swift project has been designed as follows:

Professional advice and casework

Through our research we know that there are significant gaps in the provision of advice for certain migrant communities. These gaps are most apparent in relation to the county's economic migrants who arrived when the UK was part of the European Union. Asylum Seekers that arrived independently, rather than through a government scheme, also have scant support available after being granted refugee status. Both historical and recent community research identifies that these particular migrant communities experience significant barriers to freely accessing the necessary public and voluntary sector services that they are entitled to.

Professional advice and casework is distinct from Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). The latter is made available through peer-to-peer support or established community networks. Professional advice and casework is provided by trained, paid advisors and seeks to fully resolve complex issues faced by migrants around immigration, employment, debt, housing, benefit entitlements and discrimination. Native Youth Community Adaptation Leadership Congress (NYCALC) will be commissioned to deliver this element of the Swift project with two full-time equivalent advisors covering the east and west of the county respectively. The advisors will be recruited from target communities to ensure accessibility in terms of language and culture. Advice will be provided by telephone, email and face-to-face from: the organisation's offices in Harrogate, Malton, Scarborough and Selby; Catterick Garrison; and various known informal community hubs where migrants gather. The advisors will also make internal referrals into NYCALC's specialist teams, for example Energy, Debt and Help to Claim, alongside the Law Centre.

Community development, representation and advocacy

Swift will take a targeted approach to enabling the development of Migrant Communities. Recent data (Census,2021; Homes for Ukraine Arrivals 2024, NYC) documents that patterns of migration into the county, whether through economic or refugee channels, is mostly concentrated in certain key areas. In four of these key localities, Harrogate, Selby, Scarborough and Catterick, Swift will deliver individual programmes of community development work designed to build the capacity, enable the representation of and promote peer-to-peer support and advocacy within their prominent migrant communities.

The project will work with three main community development lead organisations in each of these towns. These organisations are either established Community Anchor Organisations or locally trusted delivery partners. They are Chain Lane Community Hub in the Harrogate area, Up for Yorkshire in Selby and Coast and Vale Community Action in Scarborough. Community Development leads will undertake specific programmes of work in their area, engaging with migrants in spaces that are informal and familiar to them to undertake activity such as developing community leaders and representation groups to promote migrant views and raise awareness of migrant issues as well as creating peer-based networks to provide community-led advocacy and low-level IAG. Complex advice cases will be automatically forwarded to NYCALC.

In order to address concerns raised by migrants through our 'Community Conversations' research the project will also develop and enable communities to facilitate cross cultural events and activity to break down barriers between different nationalities and cultures in the three towns and promote integration and understanding.

As outlined in the previous section, migrants in North Yorkshire have pinpointed lack of adequate English language skills as the primary reason for marginalisation so this element of Swift will build English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) coverage across the three towns and alongside 'Life in UK' courses.

Information and awareness campaign

Through the project we propose to launch a county-wide information and awareness campaign to engage migrant populations in their places of congregation (both online and offline) and disseminate information on the rights of migrants in the county to access both public and voluntary sector services as well as key practical advice on how to appropriately access these. This will initially be achieved through the development and launch of a new (working title) 'New to North Yorkshire' website that will be an online one stop shop for accessible and language specific local information tailored to the needs of migrants.

We envisage that this campaign will evolve throughout the three years of the project and may include traditional media, 'home language' radio advertisements played on local radio stations where we are aware that large numbers of migrants work, social media space, ethnic and cultural food shops, places of worship. Our research, both historic and current, informs us that when migrants are unaware of the services they are entitled to or how to access them then they are vulnerable to exploitation by those who seek to profit from the situation. Presenting continued clear and consistent messages on service entitlements and access routes will help alleviate demand pressures on the professional IAG and community development aspects of the project.

Capacity training for the North Yorkshire VCSE

Data shows that the demographics of North Yorkshire have changed significantly since the beginning of the 21st century. In 2001 the percentage of the county's population that were born overseas was 4.4%. The latest Census (2021) states that 9.9% of the county's population was born overseas. This figure does not include the large number of Ukrainians that have arrived since the beginning of the war in 2022. As the demographics of the county have changed it is clear that our local voluntary and community groups need to adapt and change to reflect the needs, issues and cultures of their communities. Unlike other, more urban, parts of the UK, North Yorkshire has not traditionally experienced high levels of migration or cultural diversity.

During the first half of the Swift project, we will equip our voluntary community and social enterprise sector with the knowledge and skills required to engage with and assist migrants in their communities. This programme will be free of charge and open to any VCSE organisation that currently works with or seeks to work with migrant populations.

An integral part of the VCSE capacity training element of Swift, will be delivered by the four key project delivery partners who have each identified an area of expertise within the migrant agenda where they will be able to share their knowledge and experience with both the other partners and the wider sector. This element of the project is being provided as an 'in-kind' contribution by the four delivery partners who have each identified their areas of expertise as the following:

- North Yorkshire Citizens Advice and Law Centre – Immigration legislation/rights and responsibilities of Migrants
- Chain Lane Community Hub – Developing community-based English language
- Up for Yorkshire – Delivering support for those affected by trauma
- Coast and Vale Community Action – Engaging at the grassroots with hard-to-reach communities

As well as providing support, advocacy and mentoring in these areas to their sector colleagues the Project Delivery Partners will deliver structured training on these where appropriate.

Complimenting the above will be the delivery of a comprehensive package of free training available to any VCSE organisation in North Yorkshire that will combine both pre-existing 'in-house' training provision as well as training sourced through independent sector experts. A full programme will be developed in consultation with the VCSE Sector who will work with the Council to identify skills and knowledge gaps. However, it is envisaged that this free training could include:

- Immigration law and practice
- Introduction to 'recourse to public funds'
- Cultural considerations when working with migrants
- Barriers to engagement
- Developing peer networks
- Developing community-based English language provision

Following discussions with service delivery partners the following outputs and outcomes have been established and submitted as part of the application to the funder for the project. They are as follows:

| | Project total | NYCALC (County-wide) | CaVA (Scarborough) | UfY (Selby) | CLCH (Harrogate) | NYC (Other) |
|--|--------------------------|----------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------|-------------|
| Professional advice & casework | | | | | | |
| Delivered hours of professional advice & casework bespoke to the needs of Migrant residents across the whole of North Yorkshire (face-to-face & telephone) | 3,300/year | 3,300/year | | | | |
| Number of outreach sessions (through booked appointments) provided in various accessible community venues | 88/year | 88/year | | | | |
| Number of outreach sessions (through booked appointments) provided in various accessible community venues | 88/year | 88/year | | | | |
| Direct individual beneficiaries | 616/year | 616/year | | | | |
| Community Development | | | | | | |
| Community representation groups established & developed (e.g. peer led groups or networks) | 9 (duration of project) | | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| Community events (cultural & cross cultural) facilitated | 24 (duration of project) | | 7 | 7 | 7 | 3 |
| Identified community-based projects delivered | 9 (duration of project) | | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| Community-based English language provision developed & delivered | 6 (duration of project) | | 2 | 2 | 2 | |
| 'Life in the UK' activity developed & delivered | 6 (duration of project) | | 2 | 2 | 2 | |
| Volunteers recruited | 15 (duration of project) | | 5 | 5 | 5 | |

| | Project total | NYCALC (County-wide) | CaVA (Scarborough) | UfY (Selby) | CLCH (Harrogate) | NYC (Other) |
|--|---|----------------------|--------------------|-------------|------------------|---|
| Information & awareness campaign | | | | | | |
| 'New to North Yorkshire' website & associated app developed | 1 | | | | | 1 |
| Ancillary programme of targeted information & awareness raising | Outputs to be developed through the lifetime of the project | | | | | Outputs to be developed through the lifetime of the project |
| VCSE Capacity Training | | | | | | |
| Specialist advice, advocacy & support provision for the VCSE sector provided throughout the three-year life of the project by the four Project Delivery Partners; Immigration legislation & the rights & responsibilities of Migrants, developing community-led English language provision, providing support for those affected by trauma & engaging at the grassroots with hard-to-reach communities | Ongoing | Ongoing | Ongoing | Ongoing | Ongoing | Ongoing |
| North Yorkshire VCSE organisations engaged in a programme of 'working with migrant communities' training | 40 | | | | | 40 |

- 4.4 Applications to the Lotteries Reaching Communities are required through a two-stage process. Stage one is a short expression of interest outlining a general overview of the project, what it hopes to achieve, how the community have shaped its development to date and a brief synopsis of how it will be delivered. If the funder desires applicants are then invited to submit a more detailed second stage full application. The Council has been successful with both stages of the application and is now in a position where it has been officially awarded funding. The Council intends to commence delivery of Swift on 1 April 2025 and it is therefore imperative that the Council accepts these funds with as little delay as is possible to adhere to these deadlines.
- 4.5 In progressing the project to its current stage, officers have established a formal delivery partnership led by the Council along with the four main VCSE delivery partners North Yorkshire Citizens Advice and Law Centre, Chain Lane Community Hub, Up for Yorkshire and Coast and Vale Community Action. The Council is confirmed as the lead applicant and legally accountable body for funding and contractual purposes. Delivery of the project will be undertaken by the aforementioned VCSE delivery partners under a Partnership Agreement with bespoke delivery contracts in place.
- 4.6 Comprehensive advice from Legal, Finance and Procurement Officers has been acquired and an established procurement process for the project is in place. This process is as follows: A service delivery contract to NYCALC for professional advice and casework relating to the project will be procured via a procurement waiver. Service delivery contracts for community development services relating to the project in Scarborough and Selby will be procured with CaVCA and Up for Yorkshire respectively via a best value award. The service delivery contract for community development services and website development

related to the project will be procured with Chain Lane Community Hub via a best value award.

4.7 The confirmed contract values to each of the project delivery partners are as follows:

| | Year 1 (£) | Year 2 (£) | Year 3 (£) | Total (£) |
|--------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| NYCALC | 82,225 | 81,250 | 81,250 | 244,725 |
| CLCH | 44,248.66 | 35,783.66 | 35,783.68 | 115,816 |
| UfY | 29,925 | 29,000 | 29,000 | 87,925 |
| CaVCA | 29,925 | 29,000 | 29,000 | 87,925 |
| Total | 186,323.66 | 175,033.66 | 175,033.68 | 536,391 |

5.0 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN AND RESPONSES

5.1 Rationale for the original Pomoc Project emerged from a 2019 SBC report which drew upon first hand research with frontline service providers and migrants. The Pomoc Approach evaluated the two original Pomoc projects, including focus groups and interviews with project beneficiaries, providing the rationale for extended delivery on a county-wide basis.

5.2 Utilising funding (£24,000) from the UKSPF the Council has recently commissioned voluntary sector partners across the county to conduct a series of 'community conversations' with migrant communities. These have helped shape and inform the future direction of the project and ensure that our proposals are in line with community need and the 'lived experience' of migrants. Over 140 migrants engaged with the process.

6.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

6.1 This project is being designed in conjunction with trusted voluntary sector partners across the county. This is based and built on their experience within their communities and with consideration to the existing Pomoc Project in Scarborough and Ryedale.

The alternative approach should the decision be taken to accept Lottery funding, would be for Officers from the Council's Migrants Programme Team to develop access to services and community development interventions utilising smaller external funding sources on a community-by-community basis. However, the approach outlined in this report offers a more consistent and identifiable programme of activity.

7.0 IMPACT ON OTHER SERVICES/ORGANISATIONS

7.1 This project has the identified benefit of reducing potential pressures on all services and is preventative in nature ensuring migrants access the right services at the right time. These services include either internal services such as; Education, Public Health, Adult Social Care or external services such as; Primary Healthcare, Police and Housing. As the project will significantly increase and improve the engagement of migrant populations with local public and voluntary sector services this will contribute towards the Council's equalities responsibilities. The project will also contribute to reducing the risk of financial exploitation experienced by some migrant communities.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The proposed programme will be fully funded by lottery monies with no requirement for match funding. Service delivery will be managed through contracted external services and will not create an ongoing commitment beyond the funding period.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Acceptance of the funding will require the Council to enter into a grant agreement. Any grant agreement required to be signed will be reviewed by legal services and if any of the terms and conditions present an unacceptable risk for the Council then the grant offer would be declined. Service delivery contracts with identified VCSE partners will also be put in place to deliver the project.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment has already been completed in respect of this project.

11.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no climate change implications emerging from the delivery of this project.

12.0 HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

12.1 There are no human resources implications arising as a result of this report. It is intended that delivery will be undertaken through contract arrangements with trusted voluntary sector organisations.

13.0 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

13.1 This project will contribute towards a number of community safety objectives such as community cohesion, reduction in hate crime and support services for victims.

14.0 CONCLUSIONS

14.1 Given that this project contributes to the core delivery aims of the Council and the new Localities Service it is recommended that authority be granted to accept the awarded grant monies.

15.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

15.1 To ensure all appropriate permissions are obtained at this stage and enable the Council to engage with the funding application process.

16.0 RECOMMENDATION

- i) That the Chief Finance Officer, sub-delegated to the Assistant Director – Resources, following consultation with the Executive Member for Finance and the Executive Member for Corporate Services, authorises the acceptance of the grant funding in the amount of up to £425,735 over three years from the National Lottery Reaching Communities Fund.

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