

**To:** Leadership Board

**On:** 26 April 2023

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**Report by:** Chief Executive

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**Heading:** Funding for Engage Renfrewshire 2023-2024

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## 1. Summary

- 1.1 This paper outlines proposals for the allocation of £360,610 of grant funding to Engage Renfrewshire for 2023/24. Together with annual core Scottish Government funding and wider income generation, this grant funding enables Engage Renfrewshire to provide a range of activities and supports across the area and to operate as Renfrewshire's third sector interface organisation.
- 1.2 As is required by the Council's grant funding arrangements, a grant support agreement is jointly developed each year by the Council and Engage Renfrewshire, setting out the key outcomes which Engage Renfrewshire will contribute to the delivery of in Renfrewshire. The proposed grant support agreement for the financial year 2023/24 is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- 1.3 This outcomes framework is flexible, and Council officers work with the Chief Executive at Engage Renfrewshire to develop and adapt requirements at an operational level as is necessitated. For example, in light of the pandemic and cost of living crisis, officers worked with Engage to request support in new and emerging activities. This flexibility is a core feature of the current model of funding and has recently been illustrated in terms of a request made to Engage Renfrewshire to support wider community activities relating to community integration and asylum dispersal.

- 1.4 Section 4 of this report provides a brief overview of the key activities which have been progressed by Engage Renfrewshire during 2022/23 in its role as third sector interface, with a particular focus on those areas of activity which are most relevant to the grant support agreement developed with the Council.
- 1.5 As outlined in Section 1.1, funding at this level has been provided by the Council for a number of years. Engage Renfrewshire have not submitted a requisition for an annual increase to the level of grant funding allocated, and are actively managing emerging additional cost pressures within the total resources available to the organisation.
- 1.6 Elected members are asked to note that work will commence to formally review the funding arrangement with Engage Renfrewshire going forward. This is linked to the Connected Communities programme which will now be led by the Head of Policy and Commissioning Service following the retirement of the former Director of Communities and Housing.
- 1.7 As part of this programme, work is ongoing to strengthen the relationship between the Council and partners across the third and community sectors, with a core focus on ensuring that the total resources available to support organisations across sectors is directed most effectively. Officers will work closely with Engage Renfrewshire to review the current funding model, and to develop recommendations for future consideration by elected members. This could potentially involve the implementation of a new commissioning model, rather than the allocation of grant funding on an annual basis.
- 1.8 The strength of current partnership working arrangements between the Council and Engage Renfrewshire has been recognised by external bodies, and plays a key role in delivering the key outcomes identified by all community planning partners in Renfrewshire's Community Plan. Officers will continue to work very closely with the Chief Executive of Engage Renfrewshire to continue to develop and strengthen this relationship as the review progresses and proposals are brought forward for consideration by elected members.
- 1.9 Initial priorities over the period of 2023/24 are set out within the grant support agreement at Appendix A, whilst the overall organisational priorities of Engage Renfrewshire are also provided in Appendix B.
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## **2. Recommendations**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Leadership Board:

- approves grant funding of £360,610 to Engage Renfrewshire to deliver the service outlined within the grant support agreement attached at Appendix A

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### 3. Background

- 3.1 Engage Renfrewshire is the designated Third Sector Interface (TSI) for the Renfrewshire Council area. Engage provides services to support the operation and growth of community and voluntary sector organisations (also known as the third sector), including Social Enterprises, within the area. The organisation:
- supports social enterprises, community development trusts, charitable groups, mutual aid groups and more.
  - helps groups to build capacity and to be safe, by providing information, advice and training for everything from charitable structures to funding.
  - support volunteer involving organisations with recruitment and volunteer support, and work with individuals to find them rewarding and uplifting volunteer opportunities. They also work with local charities and public sector bodies to promote volunteering for all.
- 3.2 Engage Renfrewshire is funded to provide support to local community and voluntary sector organisations by the Scottish Government, and to deliver against the TSIs outcome framework for Scotland.
- 3.3 Engage Renfrewshire is based in the Engage Hub in Ferguslie Park, and a number of local organisations from both the third and public sector are tenants within the Hub. Membership of Engage Renfrewshire is free to organisations and individuals.
- 3.4 Engage also generates its own income through trading, through the provision of financial and payroll services to individuals, organisations and voluntary groups who employ people. The Payroll Service provides support to over 100 self-directed support clients who employ approximately 200 staff. During 2022, Engage Finance managed approximately £4.3million on behalf of its clients. Engage are aiming to continue to grow this function, building on their commitment to Third Sector financial governance support.
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#### **4. Key activities delivered during in 2022/23**

4.1 Engage Renfrewshire has delivered against the key activities within the Grant Support Agreement throughout 2022/23. Key activities include:

- Building capacity within the community and voluntary sector by supporting members to access development, support and funding. Engage membership continues to grow and Engage now has a membership of 431, including 417 local groups.
- Co-ordinating the Renfrewshire Social Enterprise network, enabling members to access specialist support to develop their organisations. Engage have helped RenSEN members secure an additional £152,000 of investment and seen £57,000 in cash grants allocated.
- Supporting and promoting various local funding initiatives including Multiply, the Winter Connections programme, Culture Arts and Health Social Care and Cultural Heritage and Event Funding.
- Managing and distributing the Community Mental Health and Wellbeing Fund. Alongside monitoring the delivery of projects Engage are working with cross-sector partners to develop the Renfrewshire Community Wellbeing Network.
- Supporting the Community Planning Partnership, including chairing the Forum for Empowering Communities, connecting Renfrewshire's third sector to the wider Community Planning agenda and supporting other partnership groups and activities relating to children and young people, employability, connectedness and mental health and wellbeing.
- Representatives on all Local Partnerships, and in particular supporting a partnership approach to identifying appropriate community funding sources
- Supporting local volunteering activity, promoting Volunteers Week and co-ordinating Saltire Awards across Renfrewshire.
- Continuing to lead the Renfrewshire Affordable Credit Alliance, and supporting third sector organisations to support people around affordable credit options. Renfrewshire Affordable Credit Alliance was awarded the Stop Loan Sharks Charter Mark in November. Initially funded by Renfrewshire Council, Engage successfully secured external funding to continue this work and moving forward there will be increased focus on illegal money lending prevention, while promoting the affordable borrowing options.
- Establishing and growing the Renfrewshire Integration Network (IN-Ren) and supporting wider community integration of New Scots in Renfrewshire.

- 4.2 Further information on Engage Renfrewshire's full range of services and activities for 2021-22 can be found within their Annual Report <sup>1</sup> published on their website.

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## 5. Grant funding for 2023/24

<sup>1</sup> [engage-annual-report-2022.pdf \(engagerenfrewshire.org\)](https://engagerenfrewshire.org/engage-annual-report-2022.pdf)

- 5.1 The recommended grant award would allow Engage Renfrewshire to continue to operate in Renfrewshire, and continue to support the delivery of the following key strategic priorities:
- Building Renfrewshire's community and voluntary sector capacity
  - Representing the third sector in the delivery of our Community Plan and its strategic priorities
  - Providing the strategic and operational lead for volunteering in Renfrewshire
- 5.2 A refreshed outcomes framework has been developed to support this funding arrangement. As outlined in Section 1, this remains flexible in order that support can be requested by the Council and community planning partnership in relation to emerging priorities. Particular strategic priorities for 2023/24 include supporting emerging programmes of work in relation to Fairer Renfrewshire, Climate emergency, Digital, Equalities and Refugees and Asylum seekers.
- 5.3 Further detail can be found within the Grant Support Agreement detailed at Appendix A. Appendix B sets out a one-page summary of Engage Renfrewshire's Business Plan for 2023/24, which will be used to inform monitoring of performance during 2023/24.
- 5.4 Engage Renfrewshire will continue to submit a quarterly performance monitoring report to officers in Renfrewshire Council Chief Executive's Service for review and agreement.
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## 6. Next Steps

- 6.1 As outlined in Section 1 of this report, elected members are asked to note that work will commence to formally review the funding arrangement with Engage Renfrewshire going forward. This is linked to the Connected Communities programme which will now be led by the Head of Policy and Commissioning Service following the retirement of the former Director of Communities and Housing.
- 6.2 Work is underway to review a number of functions with key interactions with the work of Engage Renfrewshire, namely:
- Community capacity building
  - Community planning support
  - Community Asset Transfer
  - Grant funding and community investment
- 6.3 As part of this programme, work is ongoing to strengthen the relationship between the Council and partners across the third and community sectors, with a core focus on ensuring that the total resources available to support organisations across sectors is directed most effectively. Officers will work closely with Engage Renfrewshire to review the current funding model, and to develop recommendations for future consideration by elected members.
- 6.4 Officers will continue to work very closely with the Chief Executive of Engage Renfrewshire to continue to develop and strengthen this relationship as the review progresses and proposals are brought forward for consideration by elected members.

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## Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** – commitment of £360,610 in grant funding to Engage Renfrewshire.
2. **HR & Organisational Development** - None
3. **Community/Council Planning** – funding for the Third Sector Interface supports the third sector contribution to all priorities detailed within both the Council and Community Plans.
4. **Legal** – None
5. **Property/Assets** - None

6. **Information Technology** - None
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report. Supporting the Third Sector Interface would have a positive impact on equalities outcomes, by developing and engaging a range of diverse voices in the community planning process and supporting the development of equalities-led third sector organisations.
8. **Health & Safety** - None
9. **Procurement** - None
10. **Risk** – Funding the Third Sector Interface mitigates risk of community and voluntary sector organisations not being able to contribute to community planning outcomes.
11. **Privacy Impact** - None
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – Cosla supports the principle of community planning as a means of improving outcomes and reducing inequalities and the importance of Third Sector Interfaces in delivering this.

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**List of Background Papers** - None

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**Author:** Annabelle Armstrong-Walter, Strategic Partnerships and Inequalities Manager, [annabelle.armstrong-walter@renfrewshire.gov.uk](mailto:annabelle.armstrong-walter@renfrewshire.gov.uk)





## **GRANT SUPPORT AGREEMENT**

**between:**

**ENGAGE RENFREWSHIRE**

**And**

**RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL**

### **1. AGREEMENT OVERVIEW**

1.1 This is an agreement between Renfrewshire Council, a local authority incorporated under the Local Government etc (Scotland) Act 1994 and having its Headquarters at Renfrewshire House, Cotton Street, Paisley, PA1 1AX and Engage Renfrewshire, a company limited by guarantee, having a registered company office at 10 Falcon Crescent, Paisley, Renfrewshire, PA3 1NS and a registered charity number of SC018453.

1.2 Engage Renfrewshire is a third sector interface that supports charities and other not-for-profit groups. Engage Renfrewshire empowers other organisations to be safe, resourceful and effective, and to grow and develop their services. Their aim is to “support local organisations to be well managed, well resourced, well represented and well connected”. They have a leadership and coordinating role that is both regional and national.

1.3 This Grant Support Agreement relates to the provision of Third Sector Interface activities by Engage Renfrewshire in the Renfrewshire during financial year 2023/24.

1.4 The Grant amount to be paid to Engage Renfrewshire relative to the support it will provide pursuant to this Grant Support Agreement is £360,610, payable quarterly in advance and commencing from 1st May 2023 until 31 April 2024. The Grant is governed by the Council’s Conditions of Grant forming appendix A of this Grant Support Agreement.

### **2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THIS GRANT SUPPORT AGREEMENT**

2.1 This Grant Support Agreement sets out the elements of support provided by Engage Renfrewshire pursuant to its award of grant funding from Renfrewshire Council.

### **3. PERIODIC REVIEW**

3.1 The Grant Support Agreement will be reviewed on an annual basis following the end of the financial year. Performance against the service agreement will be

reviewed on a quarterly basis or on a more frequent periodic basis where determined by Renfrewshire Council.

#### 4. SUPPORT AGREEMENT

4.1 Engage Renfrewshire is required to develop and maintain positive relations with and between community and voluntary groups operating within Renfrewshire.

4.2 Engage Renfrewshire is required to demonstrate the provision of the following support in fulfilment of its remit as the Third Sector Interface organisation for Renfrewshire:

### Building Renfrewshire's community and voluntary sector capacity



### Representing the third sector in the delivery of our Community Plan and its strategic priorities



## Providing the strategic and operational lead for volunteering in Renfrewshire



### 5. MANAGEMENT OF AGREEMENT

Maintain a membership database of community and voluntary organisations who are members of Engage Renfrewshire and ensure data protection in accordance with General Data Protection Regulations. Provide on request data and analysis regarding membership and trends.

Provide Renfrewshire Council with all appropriate management information necessary to manage the performance of the agreement. Reports are required on a quarterly basis, aligned to grant payments, setting out performance against the elements of service outlined above. A quarterly meeting between Renfrewshire Council Chief Executive's Service and Engage Renfrewshire will take place to discuss performance and agree any changes required to deliver fully the elements of service required.

Please confirm that you can comply with the Grant Support Agreement:

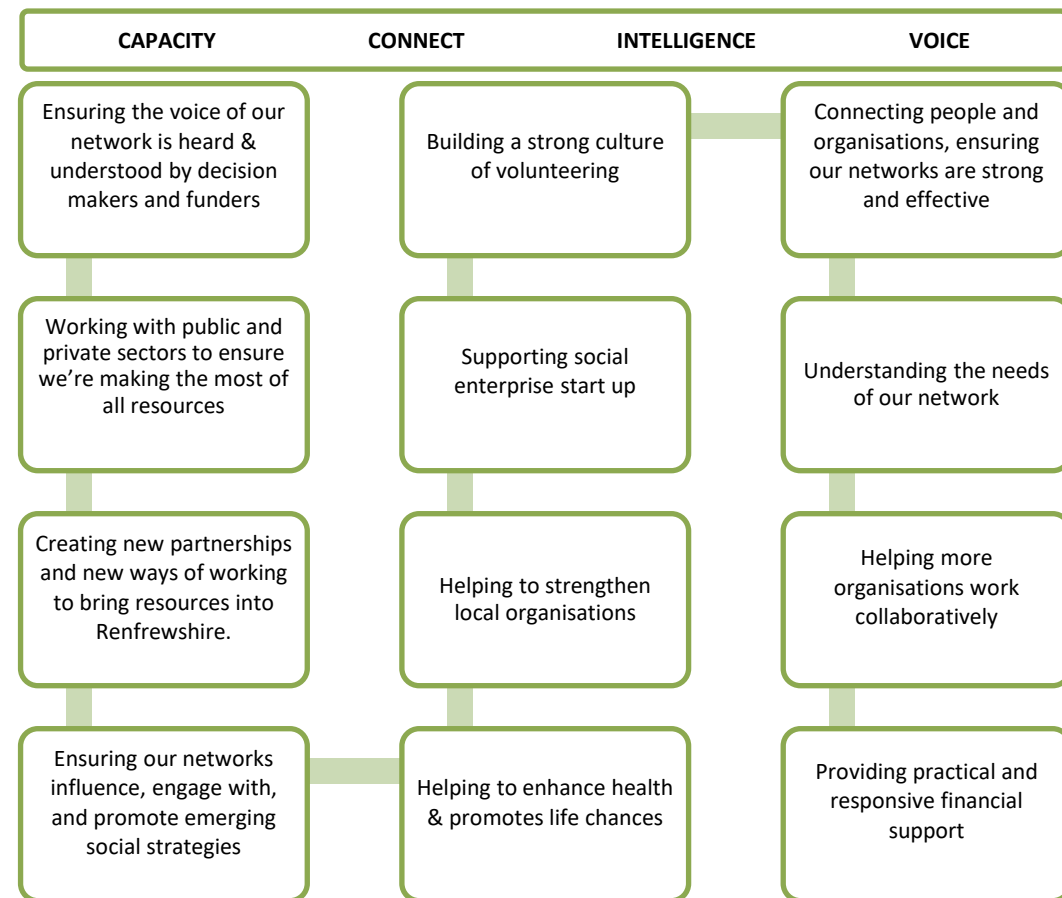
RESPONSE: YES, CAN COMPLY ☐

NO, CANNOT COMPLY (please comment) ☐

# Engage Renfrewshire – Business Plan 2023/24

Appendix B

*Our aim is to help charities and community groups to be well managed, well resourced, well represented and well connected.*



## During 2023/24 we will:

- Support Scottish Government, Renfrewshire's Community Planning Partnership and Renfrewshire's communities within the 'Recovery' agenda
- Align ourselves to key strategies including the SE & Volunteering Action Plan, ensuring the strength of the sector's role in supporting recovery
- Deliver on agreements associated with the Community Mental Health & Wellbeing fund
- Support high standards of volunteer recruitment and management within our network while promoting volunteering as part the employability pipeline
- Promote social enterprise as a viable business model through workshops and training programmes
- Assist partners to increase and develop their awareness and understanding of the local third sector
- Promote the outcomes and oversight attained from the 2022/23 Renfrewshire Social Enterprise Overview Report
- Promote Engage Financial Services to all members and partners
- Arrange and facilitate area based initiatives in support of developing community assets
- Support the delivery of the IN-Ren Network and support equality
- Support external funding applications being submitted by members
- Provide advice and support in response to humanitarian crises as they arise
- Support volunteer recruitment and develop positive destinations
- Survey the impact of volunteering
- Promote digital as a platform for engagement and use digital communications to promote the work of the Third Sector
- Deliver a training timetable reflective of the needs of our members
- Support promotions and engagement sessions around access to fair and affordable forms of credit.
- Work well with the private sector through engagement with Renfrewshire Chamber of Commerce
- Promote financial governance as a key responsibility for local organisations and local trustees
- Develop a Health led Volunteer Post in association with the HSCP

## Schedule of Monitoring

Quarterly updates prepared for Engage Renfrewshire board & Renfrewshire Council

Annual report for Scottish Government

## Medium Term Outcomes (2023 to 2028)



**ENGAGE**  
RENFREWSHIRE