

CUSPE REPORT - MEASURES OF OUTCOMES

To: **Communities and Partnership Committee**

Meeting Date: **8 November 2018**

From: **Executive Director, People and Communities**

Electoral division(s): **All**

Forward Plan ref: **Not applicable** *Key decision:* **No**

Purpose: **To receive a report from the Cambridge University Science and Policy Exchange (CUSPE) on the methods to compare the outcomes of widely different social projects.**

Recommendation: **Members are asked to approve the attendance of the CUSPE team at the next Innovate & Cultivate Fund Steering Group to present and discuss their research findings.**

<i>Officer contact:</i>		<i>Member contacts:</i>	
Name:	Adrian Chapman	Names:	Councillor Steve Criswell
Post:	Service Director: Communities and Safety	Post:	Chairman, Communities and Partnership Committee
Email:	adrian.chapman@cambridgeshire.gov.uk	Email:	Steve.Criswell@cambridgeshire.gov.uk
Tel:	01733 863887	Tel:	01487 740745

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In October 2016, Cambridgeshire County Council initiated a collaboration with the Cambridge University Science and Policy Exchange (CUSPE), which brought on teams of researchers to explore challenges faced by the County Council.
- 1.2 The Innovate & Cultivate Fund is Cambridgeshire County Council's 'up to £1 million fund' to help voluntary, community and social enterprise sector organisations realise their projects and ideas that help address the needs of local residents. The Innovate and Cultivate Fund has two funding streams:
 - Cultivate - small grants of £2,000-£10,000 aimed at encouraging local networks where people help themselves and each other
 - Innovate - larger grants of up to £50,000, for big projects with big ideas that demonstrate an innovative approach within one of the seven funding priorities for Cambridgeshire
- 1.3 There is a need to compare project proposals that have widely different social benefits during the grant allocation stage. The CUSPE team was asked to investigate ways to effectively measure outcomes of social projects and have them be comparable. This was carried out by Mindy Dulai, Jeffrey Douglass and Kathryn Muir.

2. MAIN ISSUES

- 2.1 Detail of the report. Their report, Appendix 1, provides a summary of the main findings and makes recommendations for further work.
- 2.2 The main results obtained were:
 1. A unique tool should be used to measure the outcomes for all programmes that address the same need (e.g. older people live well independently)
 2. Outcomes can be made comparable by converting different factors that contribute to welfare or social value into a common monetary value or a value specific to a desired outcome (e.g. using quality-adjusted life-year (QALY) value for health-related projects).
 3. Data already provided by the council on cashable value outcomes was very useful for applicants - they said that being signposted to this meant that they felt that they were able to articulate outcomes in the format needed by the Council. This is a great opportunity for CCC to assist with lowering the total cost of assessment, with guiding the types of assessment made and making sure that assessment is carried out in a way that makes the results more comparable across service sectors.
 4. Contracting an external party to conduct evaluation is a good way to decrease bias, e.g. assessment carried out by a third party (or by CCC) and this can reduce the cost of meaningful evaluation
- 2.3 The main challenge for the team was to use all the insightful data gathered to give a precise answer to the research question. The team has identified how projects that mitigate a unique problem can be compared together. In that case, service providers were found to have the expertise as to which was the best tool to use for measuring outcomes.

- 2.4 No single tool was found to be robust enough to compare effectively projects with widely different aim. As a result, the council should prioritise funding projects that perform best according to their specific field measurement tool and could provide alternatives to the most costly services offered by the council.
- 2.5 Through numerous interviews with current Innovate & Cultivate Fund recipients, the team has identified potential ways in which the Innovate & Cultivate Fund could potentially facilitate the outcomes measurement process. It is recommended to the Committee that the research team present the following recommendations and discuss possible implementations at the next Innovate & Cultivate Fund Steering Group:
- a) Service providers already use assessment tools that are validated within their specific field. We recommend the Innovate & Cultivate Fund collects this information as part of the evaluation process and makes it available to future applicants.
 - b) We recommend that the Innovate and Cultivate application form explicitly asks applicants how they will measure outcomes.
 - c) We recommend that the Innovate & Cultivate Fund asks for a breakdown of evaluation costs in the section of the application form titled "Section 4 - Project Budget and Supporting Documents"

3. ALIGNMENT WITH CORPORATE PRIORITIES

Report authors should evaluate the proposal(s) in light of their alignment with the following three Corporate Priorities.

3.1 Developing the local economy for the benefit of all

- 3.1.1 The following bullet point sets out details of implications identified by officers:
- Being able to compare the outcomes between different social projects can help the council invest into projects that have as much impact as possible on the people.

3.2 Helping people live healthy and independent lives

- 3.2.1 The following bullet point sets out details of implications identified by officers:
- Being able to compare the outcomes between different social projects can help the council invest into projects that have as much impact as possible on the people.

3.3 Supporting and protecting vulnerable people

- 3.3.1 The following bullet point sets out details of implications identified by officers:
- Being able to compare the outcomes between different social projects can help the council invest into projects that have as much impact as possible on the people.

4. SIGNIFICANT IMPLICATIONS

n/a

4.1 Resource Implications

There are no significant implications within this category.

4.2 Procurement/Contractual/Council Contract Procedure Rules Implications

n/a

4.3 Statutory, Legal and Risk Implications

n/a

4.4 Equality and Diversity Implications

n/a

4.5 Engagement and Communications Implications

n/a

4.6 Localism and Local Member Involvement

n/a

4.7 Public Health Implications

n/a

SOURCE DOCUMENTS GUIDANCE

It is a legal requirement for the following box to be completed by the report author.

Source Documents	Location
None	

Appendix 1 – Full report