



REPORT OF: INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

TO: POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

DATES: 19th AUGUST 2021

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MATTERS REQUIRING FINANCIAL APPROVAL

PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. The purpose of this report is for the Policy and Resources Committee to consider a request for financial support from Building Bridges.

RECOMMENDATIONS

2. The Policy and Resources Committee is recommended to consider the request for financial support from Building Bridges as set out in the report.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3. To determine what, if any, financial support is provided to Building Bridges.

ISSUE

4. One of the Council's Strategic Objectives is 'Strong Communities – To help create and sustain resilient communities'. With a resident population of c91,000 which comprises people from a diverse range of backgrounds, cultures and ethnicities, it is vital to the success of the Borough as place to '*live, work and play*' that every effort is made to sustain and improve relations between individual, neighbourhoods and communities.
5. The Council's approach to delivering this objective is to work with Partners to raise an awareness and understanding amongst people about the different cultures; promoting common values and helping people to develop and maintain friendships that cross cultural and community boundaries.

6. In particular, in recent years, the Council's work in this area has been supported through commissioning Building Bridges, a well-established community organisation based in Nelson. Building Bridges. Over a period of about 20 years, Building Bridges have developed and sustained their work with a history, track record, profile and current work that has firmly marked their position as an organisation committed to ground-breaking and innovative work in the field of education, interfaith and community cohesion.
7. Some examples of the projects undertaken by Building Bridges include:
 - **The Pendle Schools Linking Network** – Amongst the aims of the Pendle Schools Linking Network is to promote joint working between primary schools across Pendle. It has been running successfully in the Pendle District for the past four years. Each year, Building Bridges has gradually progressed the invitation for more Schools to join what has now become the most established network of Schools who are committed to an agenda of facilitating cross-cultural learning and experience for pupils;
 - **The Talking Society** – The Talking Society is pro-active campaign, bringing together people to discuss important issues which need to be talked over, in order to create a new social trend in our area where people celebrate our commonalities and are also not afraid to discuss issues which affect them.
 - **Pendle Forum of Faith** - The Pendle Forum of Faiths is a group which has been setup to become the representative body of the Faith Communities of Pendle. The Interfaith movement was the primary community need which led to the creation of Building Bridges in 1989 as a volunteer-led movement. Building Bridges continue to strive in efforts to improve Interfaith relations and to help faith communities to play a full and active role in civic and community life.
 - **Community Cohesion Action Network (CCAN)** - CCAN is an initiative led by Building Bridges and Pendle Council. Bringing together over twenty community organisations with the intention of being active together in addressing community matters. Its aims are to be proactive in pursuing opportunities for engagement on Community Cohesion matters; to network and share knowledge / good practice on local initiatives promoting integration, to remain informed on local and national policy on Cohesion, Integration, Interfaith and Prevent agendas and to discuss local cohesion matters and developed a structured 'partnership' approach towards tackling challenges in line with resources available.
8. Further details of the work undertaken by Building Bridges can be found on their website (<https://www.buildingbridgespendle.org.uk/>).
9. Over the last 4 years, the Council has supported Building Bridges with a grant of £7.5kpa (a total of £30k) as match funding for their Good Neighbours Project. This was provided as match funding towards their successful bid to the Reaching Communities Fund where they received a further £425k.
10. The current project comes to end in January 2022 and Building Bridges are now targeting a 3 year continuation of the Project that requires a budget of £440,000. For this, they are seeking match funding from the Council of £45,000 over the 3 year period (£15,000 pa) (the increased contribution from the Council is to reflect their expectation that the Reaching Communities Fund will provide less funding for the continuation of the Scheme).

IMPLICATIONS

Policy

11. There are no policy implications arising directly from the contents of this report. Commissioning Building Bridges will support the Council's work on community cohesion.

Financial

12. Building Bridges have requested financial support of £45,000 for the next 3 year period. There is currently no budget provision for this.
13. Should the Committee agree to provide funding support, this would be a supplementary revenue estimate and would have to be funded from the Budget Strategy Reserve.

Legal

14. There are no legal implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

Risk Management

15. The lack of cohesion between communities is identified as a risk on the Council's Strategic Risk Register. Commissioning organisations such as Building Bridges to undertake the work they do in communities is one way in this risk is mitigated.

Health and Safety

16. There are no Health and Safety implications arising directly from the contents of this report.

Climate Change

17. As with health and safety implications, there are no climate change or sustainability implications arising directly from this report.

Community Safety

18. There are no community safety issues arising directly from the contents of this report.

Equality and Diversity

19. Whilst there are no direct implications for equality and diversity, Building Bridges are one of the Council's key partners in the delivery of activities that support the development and improvement of diverse communities across Pendle.

APPENDICES

None.