



REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR PLACE

SUMMER PLAY SCHEME GRANT AID PROGRAMME 2015

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is twofold:
 - To provide Members with an update on Summer Play Scheme Grant Aid allocations for 2015 and to:
 - Seek Members approval to new arrangements for the allocation and approval of the summer play scheme fund for 2016 to 2018.

Information and Advice

2. At the meeting in March 2015 the Grant Aid Sub Committee agreed a grant aid fund totalling £1.75million per year from 2015-18 to contribute to supporting the delivery of services and activities by the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS). Within this budget, £16,000 per year is allocated to the provision of summer play schemes.
3. The allocation of grants to summer play schemes operates annually and provides opportunities for Nottinghamshire Voluntary Sector Play Schemes to apply for up to £1000.00 to deliver play schemes during the school summer holidays. A small discretionary amount is retained to support applications from new play schemes which fall outside of the standard application window.
4. During 2015 the Community & Voluntary Sector team [C&VS] has worked with colleagues in Communications and Marketing to promote the Summer Play Scheme fund via the local press, social media and the NCC webpage. The C&VS team and Youth Service Countywide team [YSC] also contacted previous applicants and other relevant groups e.g. Nottinghamshire Voluntary Sector Partnership and the Play Forums.

Application and Assessment Process

5. Applications were invited between 23 March – 27 April 2015 and groups were required to demonstrate how their proposed Play Scheme contributes to Nottinghamshire County Council Strategic Priorities. Applications were also assessed against the published eligibility and assessment criteria.
6. Twenty-eight applications were received and assessed. In total, the applications requested £25,695 of Grant Aid funding.
7. Appendix 1 contains data about the number of applications per district, recommendations and information relating to the groups that accepted and declined their awards In summary:

- Twenty-seven groups were recommended for funding and notified of their award, subject to a satisfactory 'pre-scheme visit' and aged-debt check. The total amount of recommended funding was £16,499.
- All groups that were successful at the assessment stage achieved a satisfactory outcome from the 'pre-start visit' – and consequently, 27 groups were offered Grant Aid funding.
- Five groups declined their award as the amount offered was less than what was requested and the groups felt that they could not deliver the scheme on the recommended funding. Therefore, 22 groups accepted their award totalling £15,040 in Grant Aid funding.

Monitoring

8. Technical Specialists from the CYS team carried out and recorded monitoring visits during the play scheme delivery period. Groups were contacted in early September, with a request to complete the online End of Scheme Report by 30 September 2015.

Support to Groups

9. The groups not recommended for funding have been provided with the reason(s) for not supporting their applications and offered support from both the C&VS and CYS Team. Positive relationships have been developed with the Summer Play Schemes and appropriate support and assistance continues to be offered to them. This, for example, includes a general health check and help with exploring ways to reduce costs and generate income.

Programme Developments

10. Over the last 2 years, a complete review and revamp of the Summer Play Scheme 'end-to-end' process and forms has taken place in line with the Corporate Grant Aid strategy – and in response to budget challenges to make the process more efficient, effective and purposeful. Developments include:
 - Use of technology e.g. introduction of online applications and online end of scheme reporting
 - Revised assessment tool and process to make it more robust and fairer
 - The introduction of 'pre-start' visits as a due diligence check
 - A revised agreement in line with Corporate requirements agreed with the Legal Services
 - Introduction of a formula for allocating funding, therefore, giving a more consistent, fairer funding allocation.
 - Use of the new corporate database to assist with information management, improve information sharing, financial recording and reporting.
11. Looking forward to the 2016 Play Scheme application round it is recommended that it opens in January, which is earlier than in previous years. This will:
 - Allow more time for all stages of the process to be implemented – including the pre-start visits and other associated tasks.
 - Enable this committee to approve officer recommendations
 - Enable payments to groups to be made sooner and consequently, enable groups to get everything in place before the start of the summer holidays
12. It is recommended that applications are invited to cover 2016 to 2018, which will bring the fund in line with the overall 3-year grant aid programme

Financial Implications

13. These are contained within the report

Reasons for Recommendations

14. The recommendations would bring a number of benefits which include improved confidence and planning for groups who will be better able to build on developments, alongside the Summer Play Scheme rounds being consistent with the 3-year Grant Aid Programme.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

16. Members are asked to consider the arrangements for the Summer Play Scheme programme from 2016 to 2018 and approve that the funding allocation be brought into line with the current 3-year grant aid programme as outlined in paragraphs 11-12 in this report.

Tim Gregory

CORPORATE DIRECTOR PLACE

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

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Constitutional Comments (SMG 02/10/2015)

The proposals in this report fall within the remit of this Committee.

Financial Comments (SES 17/09/15)

The financial implications are set out in the report.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

ALL

