

18 October 2016**Agenda Item: 5****REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR PLACE
GRANT AID IMPACT REPORT 2012-15****Purpose of the Report**

1. To provide an overview to Members of the Grant Aid Sub-Committee about the way in which the 3-year Grant Aid programme 2012/15 has contributed to achieving the Nottinghamshire County Council strategic plan.

Information and Advice

2. At the November 2011 Grant Aid Members Reference Group, Members agreed a Grant Aid 2011/15 Strategy which sought to bring about a number of significant changes in the way that the Council worked with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS). Further information about the features and drivers of the Grant Aid 2012/15 Strategy can be found in Appendix 1 to this report.
3. Over the course of the 3 years, members approved 390 grants (this includes 3-year awards and annual awards for arts, sports and summer play schemes. These Awards included number of successful joint bids to operate as 'consortiums', for example, from the Citizens Advice Bureaux, the MIND Network and Infrastructure Organisations. The financial value of the 2012/15 Grant Aid awards was just under £6m over the 3 years. Appendix 2 to this report provides a summary of awards by theme and geographical area.

The Grant Aid Programme 2012/15: Report Overview

4. This report aims to highlight the impact of the 3-year Grant Aid programme (2012-15) and includes a summary of:
 - The Grant Aid reach, i.e. the number of Nottinghamshire people who have benefitted from the Grant Aid programme
 - How the Grant Aid programme has helped to improve the lives of Nottinghamshire people
 - The contribution made by volunteers and the benefit to volunteers
 - Grant Aid as a leverage to secure other income
 - Other achievements and partnership working
 - Challenges experienced by VCS groups.

Grant Aid Reach

5. Around 596,000 people are reported to have benefited from a diverse range of Grant Aided activities and services over the 3-years. It is recognised that some service users may have benefitted from the Grant Aid programme in more than one year; therefore, assuming an estimated 198,600 people benefit from the Grant Aid programme in any one year, this would represent almost 25% of the Nottinghamshire population.*
6. The benefits of an improved quality of life, (including health and well-being), can often go beyond the immediate service users. For example, anecdotal information suggests that the family members of service users who receive support with debt and / or mental health are also likely to benefit from an improvement in the service user's financial situation and improved health and well-being.

* Using the Mid-Year Population Estimates 2014, the Nottinghamshire population was estimated at 801,400 people - as published by the Population Estimates Unit, Office for National Statistics (Crown Copyright). Source: <http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/business-employment-and-benefits/economic-data/population-estimates>

How the Grant Aid 2012/15 programme has helped to improve the lives of Nottinghamshire people

7. Through the monitoring process, groups have shared information about how Grant Aided projects and services are making a significant contribution to improving the lives of Nottinghamshire people. For example, one project reported that:

"...Feedback from service users is very positive. At the [initial] assessment stage 85% of service users reported experiencing severe loneliness and isolation. After 9 months 100% of service users reported that they felt less lonely and 75% confirmed that the visits made them feel much happier and more positive...."

Grant Aided project 2012/15

8. An overwhelming majority of groups reported that they achieved all that they set out to do during the funded period. Appendix 3 to this report includes case studies to provide an insight into how real lives are being transformed through projects supported by the Grant Aid programme. It is recognised that the full value (or impact) of the Grant Aid programme cannot be measured in monetary terms alone; many benefits to the community are priceless in terms of the improved quality of life – and in some cases, the lives that have been transformed or even saved as a result of the support received from Grant Aided groups.

The contribution made by volunteers - and the benefit to volunteers

9. Grant Aided groups reported that almost 7,300 volunteers per year deliver approximately 610,500 volunteer hours annually to support the funded activities – i.e. over 1.8 million volunteer hours over the 3 years.

10. Volunteers are crucial to enabling the VCS to deliver services, as exemplified by the following comment:

"[We] could not offer service users the range of services without an effective volunteer development programme. Volunteers have supported service users to increase self-esteem, self-worth, sense of value, gain confidence, access mainstream services and community engagement, develop peer support and meaningful friendships, build resilience, increase independence, prevent relapse, understand their condition, access volunteering and employment...." Grant Aided project 2012/15

11. Reporting the financial value of the contribution made by volunteers is challenging due to the array of variables within each project and each volunteer. However, using a conservative calculation, to employ staff to do the work carried out by volunteers would cost somewhere between £3.7m* and £7.8m** per year. Consequently, the value of volunteer time could be estimated to be between £11m and £23.4m over the course of the three-year Grant Aid programme – this is an incredible contribution to Nottinghamshire communities.

* Assuming the national minimum wage (£6.19 per hour in 2012) for adults and a 52 week year;

** Assuming the median gross hourly rate for full time employees in the East Midlands (£12.76 per hour in 2012). Source:

<http://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/bulletins/annualsurveyofhoursandearnings/2012-11-22#hourly-earnings-excluding-overtime>

12. Groups also reported that volunteers benefit from their volunteering experience:

"Our structured volunteer programme enables our volunteers to experience a range of workplace activities... Volunteers learn new skills, meet new people and gain valuable experience. For many people volunteering is a stepping stone on their career path. However, for others, they volunteer as they are unable to work due to health issues but who are able to do some work; [therefore], volunteering for these people gives them back their self-respect, confidence and even 'a reason for getting up in the morning' ". Grant Aided project 2012/15

Grant Aid as a leverage to secure other income

13. Grant Aid provides a *contribution* to the delivery of services/activities, therefore, groups must secure additional funding from other sources to cover their costs. Most funders require groups to have other funding in place - and a number of groups reported that they believe that having a Grant Aid award has helped them to secure additional funding:

"Using the core grant aid we have attracted additional funding...."

"We have continued to successfully pursue and secure charitable funding, with a total of £148,895 secured during the Grant Aid period. We believe that the award of Grant Aid has been a positive factor in our ability to secure funding from these other sources...." Grant Aided projects 2012/15

Other achievements and partnership working

14. Almost 80 groups reported that they received recognition at a local, regional or national level for their work. For example, groups have demonstrated excellence, engaged in partnership working and reported a range of achievements above and beyond the scope of the Grant Aid award. Grant Aid could be seen as a contributing factor to these achievements by supporting services/activities and enabling groups to attract additional income to enhance existing – or develop new services/activities. Below are some examples of the achievements highlighted by groups:

- Pioneering new ways of working, evidencing the value and impact of inter-generational social mobility
- Working closely together to bring policies and procedures in line to enable greater streamlining and more cost effective services
- Success in winning contracts and/or becoming a preferred service provider
- Making links and partnerships with other Countywide organisations, the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner, health organisations, and educational establishments
- Strengthened links between in-patient care and community support to ensure there is an effective and supportive transition
- Achieving local, regional and national recognition, for example:
 - The Broxtowe Youth Homelessness Peer Impact project - National Finalists for in the Team Activity category at the v-Inspired awards;
 - In 2014 APTCOO became a Centre of Excellence in recognition of their contribution towards innovative education using person-centred tools and multi-media advocacy - supporting young people to become authors of their own life stories.

Challenges

15. Despite showing tremendous resilience during challenging and unprecedented times, many Grant Aided groups also experience the key challenges experienced by the VCS. These challenges include:

- Reduced funding and difficulty in securing other funding*
- The increasing demand on – and for volunteers
- Communicating and promoting what the voluntary sector is, what it does and the benefits to communities. For example, soft outcomes (benefits and achievements) are extremely difficult to observe or measure in financial or numerical terms as it is difficult to quantify the improvement in the quality of people's lives, a change in lifestyle/attitude and a reduced or delayed need for other services/interventions.
- The nature of VCS infrastructure (e.g. diminishing support for capacity building).*

Source: Adapted from the Nottinghamshire State of the Voluntary Sector 2015 Report

16. The diverse, complex nature of the projects/services funded by the Grant Aid programme poses a significant challenge to consistent, coherent and succinct reporting as there is no single reporting model of impact or social value that fits all the funded projects.
17. For the small number of groups who did not achieve what they set out to do, they provided legitimate reasons as to why – for example, one group's premises was damaged by fire; therefore, they were restricted in the activities that they could deliver for a period of time. Sadly, eight groups closed during the funded period (including the lead organisation for the infrastructure consortium), as listed in Appendix 5 to this report.

Information Sources

18. The majority of information presented in this report has been provided by the Grant Aided groups through the monitoring process, where groups were asked to provide information on a number of generic and theme specific areas as appropriate. In some cases, information has been obtained from annual reports submitted to the Charities Commission and departmental colleagues (e.g. community transport). Where relevant, and reference has been made to the Nottinghamshire State of the Voluntary Sector 2015 report.
19. An annual review of the Grant Aid Programme for 2012/13 and 2013/14 was presented at the September 2013 and January 2015 Grant Aid Sub-Committees respectively. There were some differences to how the information was reported in each year due to the transition from a departmental to a *corporate* approach and the consequent improvements in the monitoring arrangements and information management. Due to changes in monitoring arrangements during the funding period (and possible differences in how the diverse range of groups collate their monitoring information), some of the figures presented in this report are approximate or estimated, based on the information available at the time.
20. During 2012/15 Members also approved 10 additional discretionary one-off grants with a total value of just over £203,500 as shown in Appendix 4 to this report. This report does not seek to review the discretionary grants, nor the Grant Aid strategy, arrangements or processes.

Other Options Considered

21. No other options are necessary as this report is for noting only, and to provide an overview to members of decisions already approved.

RECOMMENDATION

22. It is recommended that the value and benefits of the Nottinghamshire County Council Grant Aid programme is recognised & celebrated.

Reason/s for Recommendation/

23. The Grant Aid programme makes an enormous contribution to the Nottinghamshire County Council strategic plan.

Statutory and Policy Implications

24. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, the public sector equality duty, 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.

Financial Implications

25. There are no new financial implications as a result of this report.

For any enquiries about this report please contact:

Tim Gregory
Corporate Director, Place
0115 97 73404

Cathy Harvey
Team Manager, Community and Voluntary Sector Team
0115 97 73415

Constitutional Comments (SLB 07/10/16)

Grant Aid Sub Committee is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (SES 05/10/16)

There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

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