

**10<sup>th</sup> November 2015****Agenda Item: 9**

## **REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF PLACE**

### **UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR TEAM**

#### **Purpose of the Report**

1. To update members of the Community Safety Committee on the work of the Community and Voluntary Sector Team.

#### **Information and Advice**

2. The priorities of the team have been identified as working in partnership with the voluntary and community sector:
  - To improve preventative and core services that help strengthen the local community;
  - To streamline the corporate grant aid process and
  - To promote localism by working with communities to increase community involvement in the way services are shaped and delivered.
3. A key strategic priority for the Council is to ensure that Nottinghamshire has strong communities that are safe and thriving. The reality of the challenges faced means that the Council of the future will be different in the way it is shaped, organised and how services are delivered. The Council is committed to working in partnership with local communities, voluntary groups and volunteers to provide services.
4. Work being undertaken by the team seeks to support ways to develop and strengthen engagement with communities, moving towards a changed landscape of local services with new and innovative models being implemented. The contribution made to improving public services and well-being in Nottinghamshire by communities and the voluntary sector is recognised and supported through both an extensive grant aid programme and direct hands-on support from Community Officers.
5. Over recent years economic circumstances have drastically changed how organisations are funded with the result that only well organised voluntary groups can thrive and provide a valuable contribution to the local community. Only by being robustly established and equipped to respond to new challenges can the wealth of voluntary sector organisations across the County maximise the positive impact that they have on local communities.

## Working with Communities

6. The work of the Community and Voluntary Sector Team underpins the Council's commitment to building on its reputation of working in partnership with the community and voluntary sector to help build local capacity. The range and scope of activities which members and officers are involved in seek to help to drive programmes with communities to deliver local solutions and move towards providing services in a different way.
7. The Council has several important roles to play in supporting communities to:
  - Build a strong sense of community, capacity and pride through collaborative partnerships.
  - Engage in the planning and delivery of services.
  - Generate and sustain their own capacity to respond to the challenges which Nottinghamshire faces.
8. Building confident and stronger communities is especially important within the current climate and the Team has been working with different communities across Nottinghamshire to help support local activities. These activities bring individuals together to celebrate the uniqueness of localities by helping to encourage and empower communities to take ownership and pride in the places they live and the people they live with. Examples of this include:
  - Working with local community groups to progress the development of the Manton Community Garden initiative. This aims to increase volunteer numbers; consider introducing environmental education courses and classroom facilities on site; support the writing of applications for funding from the Lottery and a variety of national and regional trusts. To secure the best possible outcome when attracting funding, support is being given to undertake community consultation and planning over the winter period, which will in turn help to co-ordinate local activities in the spring/summer of 2016.
  - Supporting a local Boxing Club in the Harworth and Bircotes area in order to progress the establishment of "fit for purpose" facility providing sporting opportunities for local young people. The project has received £5,000 in funding through NCC's Corporate Grant Aid Programme Innovation Fund to enable the refurbishment of a building which will provide a base equipped with up to date facilities including a disabled work station which will promote health and well-being alongside encouraging community safety. This one off seed corn funding is providing a base for supporting with applications to Lottery and Coalfield Regeneration Trust.
  - Co-ordinating and hosting a seminar to focus on bringing together representatives from the Armed Forces and charities to support ex-service men and women making the transition from a military to civilian life. The event is taking place at County Hall, in the Assembly Hall, on Thursday 12 November from 9.30am to 1pm. A range of organisations will be attending including the NCC Family Service, Naval Families Federation, DMWS, Royal British Legion and Age UK Notts, Remploy and 7 Infantry Brigade & HMS Sherwood with a range of exhibitions to provide more about the services on offer. The event is open to County Council employees who can offer help and support to ex-service men and women, including: Community Officers, Youth Workers, Social Workers NHS and Health Commissioners and Managers responsible for front line service delivery.

- Supporting Bellamy Road Estate Tenants and Residents Association [RDA] Stakeholder Meetings to encourage different service providers together to come together on a bi-monthly basis to discuss and deal with any issues on the estate. This ranges from community events through to tackling and reducing Anti-Social Behaviour on the estate. Community Officers are currently working with Youth Services to relocate the Youth Bus to the South Mansfield Community Centre and work is underway looking at sighting some soil on an area of land that is disused in order to create natural ramps for local young people to use as a bike track.
  - Supporting Oak Tree Road Estate Neighbourhood Management Team looking at the potential of identifying any open spaces on the estate which can be used to build a skate park for the young people of the estate. A consultation is currently ongoing and Community Officers are working with Parks and Open Spaces as well as the Wardens and the Police to see how this can be moved forward positively.
  - Working with St John's Church Hall, Kirkby East to help them into a position where they are able to apply for Big Lottery funding to refurbish the Hall which is greatly used at the moment, providing, for example a local weekly food bank and coffee mornings, but in desperate need for upgrading and making fit for purpose.
  - Supporting Mansfield Woodhouse Youth Project which is utilising the Manor Complex to locate a young people's Multi Service Hub and Youth Centre. Donations are currently being sought from local DIY companies for things like paint brushes and paint so that the group can refurbish and brighten the place up in readiness for its official opening.
9. Through the Community & Voluntary Sector Team, the Council is working with the voluntary and community sector to engage them in the planning and delivery of services by helping to build capacity and confidence to drive improvements in quality of life, influence decisions which affect them and consider their role in the delivery of services. This include:
- Supporting communities to attract external funding, through both leveraging in support as a direct result of the County Council's own Grant Aid Programme and for example, working closely with voluntary groups such as the Core Centre Calverton to secure approximately £300,000 from the Lottery over a 3 year period to help to provide door-step services to the most vulnerable in a former coalfield area including legal services such as family law C.A.B. debt/housing and legal, access to internet & job club/interview techniques, Befriending & a craft club for the over 60's. In addition medical checks in conjunction with NHS - hearing, diabetic, blood pressure are also now being offered alongside education courses, working in partnership with Central College Nottingham to deliver, IT, Maths, English, Language - French and Spanish, Genealogy and Sage accounting courses.
  - Supporting the elected member and the local community in Sandhills, Worksop to develop the Lake improvement scheme. Following extensive consultation with the community, this initiative consistently scored highly as needing attention. The County Council's Community Officer for the area was instrumental in securing over £100k, made up of funding from sources such as WREN; NCC Local Improvement Scheme and Bassetlaw District Council to improve the area and make safer for community access. Similarly, working with the local community and elected members, the team has supported successful funding applications securing over £50,000 to build Manton Villas Play Park. In addition the team are involved in working with the Carlton, Costhorpe and Langold 'Big-Local' initiative helping to secure £1million over 10 years to benefit the local area.

- Working with groups which are operating in areas of disadvantage or that are facing high levels of exclusion or disadvantage, for example, providing support to small and volunteer led groups which provide a life line for many vulnerable communities. Many of these groups evolve out of community need, are led by local people and support local people. Community Officers have been supporting groups such as Ekta luncheon club and cancer support group offering a service in the south of the county for people over 50 years of age, largely from Asian backgrounds; Gedling Asian Elders, Nuttall Phoenix Community Group and Shireoaks Luncheon Club encouraging elderly citizens to get out and about reducing the impact of loneliness and isolation.
  - Working with groups who are going through a period of transition or change within their organisation and are motivated to work with others and share their own experiences and learning, for example, working with and supporting groups such as OASIS community centre in Kilton, Worksop to provide a weekly youth club which include a workshop programme to develop new enterprises and working with Gedling CVS, helping them through a difficult period of closure whilst ensuring that vital services such as the voluntary transport scheme is continued to be delivered.
  - Undertaking community development work which has a positive and lasting impact on the local community, for example, supporting the initial stages of development and potentially the build of Oaktree Estate Skate and Play Park which has reduced vandalism and inappropriate behaviour in the area, alongside providing leisure and physical activity opportunities for young people in the community.
  - Capacity building in communities to support empowerment and resilience which equips communities and people with the skills and knowledge to help them contribute to their changing communities, for example, maximising the findings of the State of Voluntary Sector Report to engage with all voluntary and community stakeholders to focus on future collaborative working. Work is now underway, as part of the Council's Community Empowerment and Resilience Programme to agree the challenges faced and developing a shared vision which addresses issues of sustainability, leveraging capacity and building confidence.
10. As part of NCC's duty to promote community cohesion across Nottinghamshire, the team is supporting communities by working in partnership with the Voluntary Sector and other stakeholders to facilitate and enable different groups of people to get on well together. A key contributor to community cohesion is integration, which is what must happen to enable new residents and existing residents to adjust to one another to promote equal participation in wider society.
11. Through the delivery of all its services the Council's role in fostering integration is an important element of a cohesive community which is a priority. To help support this priority, funding has been allocated from the Community Safety initiatives budget to support activities across Nottinghamshire. The Community & Voluntary Sector Team have worked with communities to develop projects and activities which encourage residents to take a positive stance towards ensuring that integration occurs within their own communities.
12. The activities and projects being supported promote integrated and cohesive communities to enable people from different backgrounds have similar life opportunities, to know and understand their rights and responsibilities alongside trusting one another and trusting local institutions to act fairly. Activities and projects have aimed to promote: A shared future vision and sense of belonging; a focus on what new and existing communities have in common,

alongside recognition of the value of diversity and the promotion of strong and positive relationships between people from different backgrounds. These activities and projects are detailed in Appendix 1 of this Report.

### **Other Options Considered**

13. The report sets out how the Council priorities are being addressed.

### **Reason/s for Recommendation/s**

14. To inform Members of Community Safety Committee of work undertaken to support the community and voluntary sector in Nottinghamshire

### **Statutory and Policy Implications**

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working 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. To note the work undertaken by the Community and Voluntary Sector Team

**Tim Gregory**  
**Corporate Director, Place**

**For any enquiries about this report please contact:**

**Cathy Harvey**  
**Community and Voluntary Sector Team Manager**  
**T: 0115 977 3415**  
**E: [cathy.harvey@nottsc.gov.uk](mailto:cathy.harvey@nottsc.gov.uk)**

### **Constitutional Comments**

This report is for noting only

### **Financial Comments**

There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report [SES 03.09.15]

## **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.

- 'None'

## **Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected**