

1st March 2016**Agenda Item: 11**

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 third sector 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 Gunthorpe Riverside Trust [GRT]

- Set up in March 2014 and is a volunteer led subcommittee of Gunthorpe Parish Council in the district of Newark and Sherwood. GRT manage and maintain 11 acres of riverside scrub land and green space, west of Gunthorpe Bridge, and north of the River Trent, including the bridleway under the bridge and adjoining water ski area in front of the Unicorn Hotel, a total of 800m of riverside frontage. An officer from the C&VS Team has provided support in seeking and developing a funding bid to the Tesco - Bags of Help - Grant Scheme in November 2015.
- If successful the project will mean that volunteers will realign and improve a section of the bridleway by removing tarmacked areas and re grassing and planting natural flora. They will also replace boundary fencing, stabilise parts of the eroded riverbank, and restore fishing pegs. Security gates for horse riders and cyclists will be installed at both ends of the bridleway to prohibit unauthorised motor vehicles.
- Local school children will take part in the planting of an avenue of native trees alongside the river Trent as part of a living memorial dedicated to local men and women from Gunthorpe who lost their lives during the Great War. The main programme will take effect from 1 April 2016 subject to the outcome of the public vote and subsequent award. The planned planting of a memorial avenue of native trees by local school children will take place on Saturday 20 February, start 11am.

Promoting Community Cohesion

- Working with The Forces Bike shed project which is a volunteer run initiative based in Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell. The project provides serving and veteran members of the Armed Forces, their families and the local civilian population an

opportunity to gain experience, develop transferable skills and broaden their knowledge in the refurbishment, restoration and general maintenance of motorcycles. It seeks to improve the lives of those who may be struggling through injury or illness during service or the transition from military to civilian life. A Community Officer has been working with volunteers to encourage a cohort of young people from Stapleford, supported by the local Youth Worker, to join the Bike shed project and take part in six, two hours sessions.

- Young people will learn basic motorcycle mechanics and gain experience working with tools. Young people will also work alongside those from the Armed forces who may be struggling with illness or injury. It is hoped that by working together and sharing experiences it will support the forces personnel through their pathway to recovery, and create greater understanding from all sides.
- The project will also provide an opportunity for young people wishing to start a career in mechanical type jobs and motor courses for college options to work. The project also fulfils both Chetwynd Barracks and NCC's commitment to the 'Armed Forces Covenant' by improving local links.
- Working with partners in Netherfield to support community integration as a key target for 2016. The aim is to explore service provision and engagement opportunities to address; social integration, language issues, anti-social behaviour. Activities will encourage the sharing of experiences incorporating cultural exchanges, language, food, music, iconic figures and national identity. Residents will be encouraged to attend a community event inside the St George's Centre – Netherfield so that a consultation can take place and where residents can sign up to courses
- The aims are to support agencies and services to design and deliver a pathway to education or employment or both, strengthen community relations, underline positive actions and promote social cohesion alongside reducing mistrust and anti-social behaviour.

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 includes:

Working with and supporting Bellamy Estate residents

- Supporting residents to get lockable bollards at both ends of Old Newark Road installed on the Estate. There has been a long standing history of Fly Tipping down the lane as it is completely out of site. Unfortunately within a week of putting in these new bollards (at some considerable cost) one of the bollards was rammed by a vehicle and damaged. The fly tippers have now decided to go round the outside of the bollards and access the lane using the banking.
- Working jointly with an MDC Enforcement Officer, a Community Officer has encouraged Severn Trent Water who are working in the area laying down new sewerage drains for the new housing estate in the area to provide two sewerage rings and fill them with rubble free of charge for the community

Harworth and Bircotes Boxing Centre.

- The team is supporting the fundraising ambitions of this project – the aim being to complete the refurbishment works to an existing building to provide a 'centre of excellence' in the heart of a local community. Currently space is limited there are poor changing facilities and no showers. The project will provide an up to date facility which will promote health and wellbeing for all who take part – over 30 young people. Expected outcomes include improved fitness levels, confidence building, increase employability and decrease the likelihood of involvement in criminal activity and anti-social behaviour. Sir John Peace recently visited the centre and has expressed support for the project.

Manton Community Garden

- Supporting the development of this community initiative, the team has provided new publicity with the aim of promoting the project and attracting volunteers. The community volunteers are now considering funding options to allow further work to go ahead on the site and improve the facilities and communal areas. Work to continue into Spring/Summer 2016.

Other Options Considered

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

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

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

Statutory and Policy Implications

12. 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

13. To note the work undertaken by the Community and Voluntary Sector Team

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Constitutional Comments [LM11/02/16]

This report is for noting only

Financial Comments (SES 09/02/16)

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.

- 'None'

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

- All