

8 July 2013**Agenda Item: 8****REPORT OF THE TEMPORARY GROUP MANAGER SAFER AND ENGAGED
COMMUNITIES****TIN HAT CENTRE - SELSTON****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek approval to make a grant with special conditions of £10,000 to the Tin Hat Centre Selston, which will enable continued service delivery whilst longer term sustainability issues are addressed and resolved.

Information and Advice

2. The Tin Hat Centre is a Community Resource Centre situated on land owned by Nottinghamshire County Council in Selston. The Centre opened in 2002 and was built using funds from Nottinghamshire County Council, the Millennium Commission (National Lottery) and European Regional Development Funding.
3. The Centre is governed by a Board of Trustees and is a registered charity, with the following aims, to:
 - Promote physical & emotional well being
 - Provide therapeutic and physical activities, creative and intellectual stimulation as well as relaxation
 - Provide opportunities for connecting with others, improving self-esteem and reducing social isolation
 - Enable local people to acquire new skills, to help them compete in the labour market
 - Provide healthy eating options in the café
 - Provide resources and support to local community groups
 - Provide a meeting point for the residents of Selston
4. To fulfil the aims of the centre the following are examples of some of the activities undertaken in 2012/13:

• Boccia Chair Bowling	• Wire Craft/Crochet
• Tai Chi	• Jewellery making
• Food Hygiene	• Parenting skills
• First Aid/Paediatric First Aid	• Sugar craft
• Spanish/French	• Art/Calligraphy
• IT skills/Imaging/Internet & email	• Archaeology & Egyptology
• Watercolour	• Stained glass making

- Flower Arranging
- Yoga
- Radio Broadcasting
- Cooking with kids
- Singing
- Creative writing
- Oil painting
- Drawing

5. These activities attracted over 12,000 individual attendances to the centre in 2012/13.
6. The County Council has been approached by the Trustees seeking financial support to keep the Centre open whilst attempts are made to secure the longer term sustainability of the Centre.
7. The Centre depends on 2 long term leaseholders for the majority of its income – Nottinghamshire Police and a Surestart Children's Centre – this generates in the region of £20,000 per year. Additional income is raised through ad-hoc charging of groups and organisations that hire the facilities.
8. The Centre currently employs four staff, one of which is a cleaner – this has reduced from 5 and is felt to be minimum required to keep the centre open.
9. The most significant cost is staffing and this was just under £35,000 last year – this includes all salary and NI Costs. Other major cost headings are utilities at £11,000 and building/equipment repair and maintenance at £13,000.
10. The Centre currently holds £15,000 in cash reserve and the cash flow forecast sees this figure reducing to £9,500 at the end of July 2013. This is deemed to be a trigger point by the Trustees that they would need to consider closure action. This would enable them to serve 3 months notice to staff and other occupants of the building.

Financial Implications

11. If the County Council were able to offer a grant with special conditions of £10,000 to the Tin Hat Centre it would give them up to six months to work with partners (including the County Council) to review their current operating arrangements and identify ways of securing additional income.
12. The special conditions attached to the grant would be that an agreement is made between the Council and the Tin Hat requiring that the Board of Trustees agree to work in partnership with the County Council to look for more sustainable funding solutions.
13. The grant will be funded from the 2013/14 grant aid budget.
14. A number of organisations are keen to work together to keep the Centre operational – these include: Ashfield District Council, Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire, Community Accounting Plus and Pro-Help (Business in the Community). The County Council, through its Community & Voluntary Sector Team, has agreed to co-ordinate the support and will be working closely with the Trustees and Centre Manager.
15. Tin Hat is working with the County Council as part of a wider project on the role of Community Resource Centres and has a meeting booked with advisers from the Big Lottery to explore funding from its Reaching Communities fund.

Other Options Considered

16. The Trustees to serve 3 months notice to staff and occupants of the building in July 2013. This would result in the loss of a significant amount of community based activity and the closure of a community asset in a relatively isolated community within Nottinghamshire
17. That a one off grant is made of £10,000, with no special conditions attached. NCC wants to encourage groups to move towards greater sustainability. This approach would not support this principle and may not encourage the Tin Hat to seek longer term funding support.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

18. The Tin Hat provides a Centre for a wide range of community based activity to take place. It serves all age groups of the local population and provides a modern well equipped environment for people to meet, interact and learn. To allow the centre to close without first exploring a coordinated package of support and advice is not a sensible response to their current situation. Approval of a grant would allow the Tin Hat and partners 6 months to review the operational model and secure a more sustainable financial future.

Statutory and Policy Implications

19. 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

It is recommended that:

- i) The Grant Aid Committee approves a grant with special conditions of £10,000 to the Tin Hat Centre.
- ii) The Board of Trustees of the Tin Hat Centre agree to work in partnership with the County Council to develop more sustainable funding solutions
- iii) Nottinghamshire County Council Community & Voluntary Sector Team co-ordinates a partnership approach to reviewing the current operational model.

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Constitutional Comments (NAB 25.06.13)

The Grant Aid Sub-Committee has authority to approve the recommendations set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (NDR 25.06.13)

The financial implications are set out in paragraphs 11 to 15 of the 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

Selston