

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 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 to help support local activities which bring individuals together to celebrate the uniqueness of localities. This has included:

- The Bellamy 'Summer Spectacular' Fun Day held on 19th September 2015 bringing together people from the local community and local services such as the Police, Fire and Rescue and local health services. The Tenants and Residents Association [TRA] supported by NCC's Community Officer organised a day of fun with stalls, bouncy castles, performances and produce from local allotments.
- Helping to establish a community festival through support to Porchester Forum resulting in the development of 6 separate events - St James Fun Day, Westdale Junior Summer fair, Mapperley Bowls Club open day, Cinema Club, Community quiz & a celebration event. The St James Fun Day & Celebration events where over 500 attended the Fun day and 100 attended the celebration event.
- Support to Eton Avenue Growers Community Allotment initiative which encourage local people with learning difficulties and mental health challenges to engage in growing their own produce and selling them to local people and businesses. The initiative has been faced with dwindling volunteer numbers and help with arranging an open day and seed exchange alongside seeking funding for the purchase and installation of a dried compost toilet it is hoped more volunteers will be attracted.
- Working with Parish Councils and the Libraries Service to develop community partnerships by providing advice on funding and policy development e.g. volunteering and safeguarding
- Working with the Veterans Information Network to provide support and advice to enhance the wellbeing of the armed forces and veterans in Nottinghamshire, for example hosting and co-ordinating an information event on 12th November 2015 for service providers across the statutory and voluntary sector in Nottinghamshire.
- Working with Welbeck Community Association to reinvigorate life into a community green space. This includes ideas around a sensory garden, wildlife wetland and small play area as well as pleasant open spaces for the wider community to enjoy. The Association are currently being supported to consult with the community and school to ensure they capture everyone's ideas. Once this has been established, they will work in partnership with the District Council and other agencies to try and deliver their objectives dependent on external funding outcomes.
- Successfully supporting Mansfield Woodhouse Youth Project to establish a permanent base in order to deliver a variety of services for young people in the Mansfield Woodhouse area. This includes working with professional agencies that have a

specialism in young people's services. Community Officers are also supporting the group with lottery funding to ensure the long term delivery of this service.

- Supporting engagement activities in the Worksop area concentrating on helping the Polish community interact /integrate with the local community to promote cohesion. Centred round Manton Centre for Sport and Learning, this initiative has resulted in a regular 'Language Cafe'; a database of contacts; positive contributions to local culture by Polish people e.g. in organising International Children's Day and plans to progress a Reaching Communities Lottery application to include information services for Polish and English people, expected to be in the region of £500,000 over 5 years.

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 groups which are operating in areas of disadvantage or that are facing high levels of exclusion or disadvantage, for example, providing support to Kingsway Community Hall to develop a 5 year Reaching Communities Lottery application worth £374,000 over 3 years to enhance services to older people and develop the youth club. Stage 1 of the application process has been successful.
- 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, developing a relationship with Vision School Mansfield to develop opportunities for students to engage in community projects with voluntary organisations
- Undertaking community development work which has a positive and lasting impact on the local community, for example, supporting the development and build of Rainworth 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 and equip people with the skills and knowledge to help them contribute to their changing communities, for example, work is being developed to establish a 12 month pilot scheme of support for people in the more isolated rural areas of Bassetlaw. The pilot will offer a range of health and wellbeing services within the local community, using church resources, in partnership with the district council, NCC and the CCG and other appropriate agencies such as Advice Bassetlaw. A rural community hub will be created, giving people at risk of, or experiencing social and rural isolation, access to a social network and a variety of services.
- The recruitment and appointment of an Community Empowerment Apprentice to support the team, bringing a young adults perspective to the challenges ahead alongside learning skills in community development

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

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

- 'All'