



26 January 2016

Agenda Item: 5

REPORT OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF PLACE

UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR TEAM.

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the work of the Community & 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 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.

6. As a part of managing the delivery of the corporate grant aid programme, the Community and Voluntary Sector Team work in partnership with voluntary and community groups 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.
7. Work being undertaken by the team which 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 the Council's extensive grant aid programme and direct hands-on support from Community Officers.
8. 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, alongside the provision of grant aid funding seeks to help to drive programmes with communities to deliver local solutions and move towards providing services in a different way. 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 local

Nottinghamshire's State of Sector survey

9. The Centre for Regional Economic & Social Research from Sheffield Hallam University conducted an independent survey of the Voluntary & Community Sector (VCS) of Nottinghamshire during the summer of 2015. The survey was commissioned by Nottinghamshire County Council and co-designed with representatives of Nottinghamshire's VCS.
10. The survey received 241 responses and has provided a valuable insight into the contribution the VCS play in Nottinghamshire and will help to develop the Council's approach to community empowerment and resilience as approved by Policy Committee in July 2015.
11. Two events were held in October with over 160 people attending the events covered the:
 - Anatomy of the Sector - What does the Sector do in Nottinghamshire?
 - Financial Position in Nottinghamshire
 - VCS Workforce - Paid & Volunteers and the contribution this makes to the County
 - Relationships with the Public Sector & with Commercial Businesses
 - Relationships with other Voluntary Sector Groups including those that offer support.
12. More importantly delegates explored the opportunities and challenges identified by the survey, further work is being completed to develop plans for more collaborative working for the benefit of Nottinghamshire's communities.

Gedling Community Transport

13. At the last meeting of the Grant Aid Committee members were advised that Gedling CVS had closed. The very popular Volunteer Driver Scheme funded through the County Council Grant Aid Programme needed to be continued and members agreed to “passport” this grant aid to Rushcliffe CVS (RCVS) to continue the delivery of this service to Gedling residents.
14. Since the last meeting the CVS Team and NCC colleagues in Community Transport worked closely with RCVS to ensure a smooth transition, this included development of new publicity materials, communicating with existing service users and securing the commitment of the team of volunteer drivers in Gedling. This collaborative approach secured a smooth transition and continuation of this valued local service.

Grant Aid Innovation Fund

15. At the October meeting of the Grant Aid Sub-Committee members agree to support 13 Youth projects with a combined value of £50,000. All the organisations now have a Grant Aid agreement in place and have been paid. The projects supported are set to be delivered through 2016 and an update on progress will be provided at a future meeting of this committee.
16. Members should note that the annual £50,000 Innovation Fund has been put forward as a savings proposal as part of the budget consultation for 2016/17.

Working with Communities

17. 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. Some examples of this include:
- 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.
 - Councillors Liz Plant and Alice Grice joined 109 British Iranians and their guests at the Grange in Radcliffe on Trent on Sunday 18 October. Funded by the community cohesion fund and private donations the event was designed to bring together the Iranian community in Nottinghamshire to celebrate the Persian festival of Mehregan. This volunteer led event included a slideshow of home photos detailing Iranian life and society, an exhibition of Persian artefacts, food, music, poetry and traditional stories. The Office for National Statistics estimated that, in 2011, 83,000 Iranian-born people were living in the UK. As a region the East Midlands has the eighth highest population in the UK with an estimated 2,000 to 4,000 living in Nottinghamshire. The Mehregan Thanksgiving festival; the autumn festival of harvest was specifically chosen as a

calendar date to bring the known community in Nottinghamshire together, to gather information on how best to support Iranian community, by the Iranian community, the organisation is called NIMA.

- Veterans Information Network Nottinghamshire, (VINN) held a civilian Life seminar 12 November hosted by NCC with 110 delegates attending. Returning to civilian life after leaving the armed forces can prove a struggle for many veterans. Charities in Nottinghamshire have come together to form a partnership to help those in need. The VINN is a collective of local and national charities working together to support the welfare and wellbeing of the Armed Forces and the Veteran community in Nottinghamshire, which includes regulars, reservists or cadets and their immediate families. The event was opened by the Leader of the County Council Alan Rhodes. The programme included presentations from the Royal British Legion, 7th Infantry Brigade, Combat Stress, Remploy, NCC Children, Families and Cultural Service, Age UK, Soldiers Sailors & Families Association. Also included was a video of the work being carried out at Stanford Hall, near East Leake, to create the Defence and National Rehabilitation Centre which will be opened in 2018. In addition to those presenting, they were joined in an exhibition by; Army Benevolent Fund, HMS Sherwood, Army Families Federation, Remploy, Royal Air Forces Association, Forces in the Community, Defence and Military Welfare Service, RAF Families Federation, East Midlands Reserve Forces and Cadet Association, and the Naval Families Federation.
- Supporting Bellamy Road Estate Tenants and Residents Association [RDA] Stakeholder Meetings to encourage different service providers together to come together on a bimonthly 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 to explore a location for 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 officially opened at the Manor Complex on 14 December creating a young people's Multi Service Hub and Youth Centre.
- Working with colleagues in NCC Property to evaluate the impact and value of the Haven Centre in Stapleford who are seeking a long term lease of the former Frederick Harrison Primary School. The Group have been in the school for 15 months and over that time have developed a number of practical services to support the local community. The projects include a Foodbank, Community Café, Mother & Toddler group, After School & Homework Club, Youth Club, Seniors Club (the Haven Eagles), Job Club, & a

Community Cinema. The estimated value of these service in the past year is £240,000. They are hoping to secure a 25 year lease to enable them to continue with the work they are doing and they are looking to expand services to include Debt/Welfare Advice (partnership with the Citizens Advice), Clothes & Furniture Bank, Life Skills Training, Performance Arts Workshops, Dementia Café, Seniors Lunch Club & Conference & Training Facilities.

18. 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:

- Work being developed in N&S Partnership Plus areas to engage with local East European community concentrating on positive actions in order to address social integration, language issues, anti-social behaviour and provision of services. A mapping exercise underway to determine population concentration, current provision and engagement opportunities. In addition work is planned to engage local employers, recruitment agencies, churches and schools.
- Supporting the development of the Manton community garden initiative, the team has recently developed new publicity with the aim of promoting the project and attracting volunteers. This to be integrated with the Centre for Sport and Learning community engagement initiatives. Work underway to enlist community workforce to construct new facilities to improve the site and prepare the area for activities in the spring of 2016.
- The team are supporting a new initiative to combat social and rural isolation in Bassetlaw. The aim is to improve access to social networks and signpost to services locally thereby hoping to improve the health and wellbeing of the community. Links made with service providers including BCSV, Bassetlaw Action Centre, Police Service, Fire Service, MIND and local groups. An initial meeting took place on Wednesday 2 December 2015 and work will continue to develop in 2016.

Other Options Considered

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

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

20. To inform Members of Grant Aid Sub Committee of work undertaken to support the community and voluntary sector in Nottinghamshire.

Statutory and Policy Implications

21. 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

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

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Constitutional Comments (LM 4/1/16)

The report to update on the work of the Community and Voluntary Sector Team is for noting only

Financial Comments (SES 06/01/16)

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'

