

CABINET – 16TH JANUARY 2020

Report of the Head of Neighbourhood Services Lead Member: Cllr Deborah Taylor

Part A

ITEM 8 CHARNWOOD GRANTS STRATEGIC PARTNERS 2020/21 – 2021/22

Purpose of Report

To put forward proposals for the Strategic Partner Grant Scheme funding for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Recommendations

1. That the following Strategic Partner Grants be approved, subject to budget approval:

| Organisation | Amount Awarded 2020/21 (Year 1) | Amount Awarded 2021/22 (Year 2) |
|---|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Charnwood Citizens Advice Bureau* | Up to £90,928 | Up to £90,928 |
| Clockwise Credit Union | £8,298 | £8,298 |
| Equality Action | £20,978 | £20,978 |
| Fearon Hall Community Association | £30,489 | £30,489 |
| Gorse Covert Community Association | £20,432 | £20,432 |
| John Storer Charnwood | £86,656 | £86,656 |
| Shepshed Volunteer Centre (John Storer Charnwood) | £9,781 | £9,781 |
| Living Without Abuse | £17,165 | £17,165 |
| Syston Volunteer Centre** | £9,781 | £9,781 |

*Charnwood CAB funding includes £62,428 for the CAB element and up to £28,500 for Specialist Money Management and Debt Advice (SMMDA) element

**Funding approved in principle for Syston Volunteer Centre – see recommendation 3 below

2. That the Head of Neighbourhood Services be given delegated authority to finalise the terms and conditions of the Strategic Partner Grants awarded and Service Level Agreements and agree a final grant award amount with Charnwood Citizens Advice Bureau, in consultation with the Lead Member.

3. That a Strategic Partner Grant be awarded in principle to Syston Volunteer Centre, subject to them continuing to work with the Council and receipt of evidence demonstrating that they have revisited their business plan and are moving towards further community engagement / volunteering activities, by the end of March 2021 (end of Year 1) and that the Head of Neighbourhood Services be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Lead Member, to determine the most appropriate way forward.

Reasons

1. To provide appropriate levels of financial support to those organisations that have submitted applications and been assessed as meeting the criteria for the Strategic Partner Grant Scheme.
2. To enable the grants awarded to be finalised with an approved Service Level Agreement and appropriate information to be supplied to the Council about the outcomes of the projects/services and determine final grant award amounts.
3. To ensure that the organisation is developing and progressing before any continued (Year 2) funding is awarded.

Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

Strategic Partner Grants were last approved by Cabinet in January 2018 (Min. 79) for a period of two years. At that time 11 Strategic Partners were awarded a Strategic Partner Grant. As the current Service Level Agreements will be coming to an end in March 2020, Strategic Partners have again been invited to apply for funding for a further two-year period (2020/21 and 2021/22). As part of that process a review of each organisation has taken place to ensure that the organisations are still meeting the expectations of the Strategic Partner Grant scheme, and the aims of the current Corporate Plan.

Existing Strategic Partners were invited to apply for funding for a two-year period ending in March 2022, with the exception of Charnwood Twenty Twenty, who had previously informed the Grants Panel, that due to a reduction in the level of service they are providing locally, that they no longer feel that they meet the criteria for being a Strategic Partner and therefore have withdrawn as a Strategic Partner. In addition, the Council's Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer has been working with Rosebery Community Centre on their business plan and as a result they have also decided not to reapply to be a Strategic Partner going forward. Both of these Strategic Partnerships with the Council will end at the end of March 2020.

In addition, Citizens Advice Bureau, have previously received a separate annual grant to deliver specialist money management and debt advice work, it has been decided that going forward that this will be amalgamated with their Strategic Partner Grant and be awarded for the two years. There is an additional budget of up to £28,500 to fund this element of work, discussions with regard to this are currently still ongoing.

Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions and Scrutiny

Following approval of the recommendations, the Strategic Partners will be notified of the outcome and the level of funding awarded over the two years. Officers will agree their Service Level Agreement and the schedule of grant payments for 2020/21 from 1st April 2020.

Each Strategic Partner will have a Borough Council Lead Officer, who will visit the organisation at least twice a year, usually in June and November. They will complete a Monitoring Return at each meeting and submit this to the Grants Administrator. The payments will then be released subject to the Monitoring Return being approved by the Neighbourhoods and Partnerships Manager.

At the end of the year each organisation will supply overall monitoring and evaluation evidence for the full year and subject to approval, they will then receive the agreed level of funding for 2021/22.

Report Implications

The following implications have been identified for this report.

Financial Implications

Strategic Partner Grant Scheme Funding

It has been proposed as part of the 2020/21 budget that the Strategic Partner Grant amounts will stay the same as they were in 2019/20. The maximum amount that each Strategic Partner can apply for is reflected in Appendix 1 and the second year of funding will be confirmed following an evaluation at the end of Year 1 and will be subject to budget approval as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process.

The budget for the Strategic Partner Grant Scheme for 2020/21 will be £294,500 subject to budget approval, which includes for an amalgamation of the Strategic Partner and the Specialist Money Management and Debt Advice grant budgets. There is currently a potential shortfall of £1800 in 2021/22 which will be resolved as part of the 2021/22 budget setting process.

Risk Management

The risks associated with the decision Cabinet is asked to make and proposed actions to mitigate those risks are set out in the table below.

| Risk Identified | Likelihood | Impact | Overall Risk | Risk Management Actions Planned |
|---|---------------------|------------------|---------------------|--|
| Grants do not deliver the objectives of the Grants scheme | Unlikely (2) | Minor (1) | Very Low (2) | The grants have been assessed against the scheme's criteria and will be linked to the provision of appropriate monitoring information. |

| Risk Identified | Likelihood | Impact | Overall Risk | Risk Management Actions Planned |
|--|-----------------|--------------------|--------------|---|
| That Strategic Partner Organisations cannot demonstrate sustainability | Unlikely (2) | Significant (2) | Low (4) | That the financial profile of the organisations is reviewed at application and after the first year. Where there are concerns about sustainability further assurance is required before funds are released. |

Equality and Diversity

There is a requirement in the grants criteria for each organisation that applies to either have their own Equal Opportunities Policy or provide a statement that the organisation will abide by the Council's Equal Opportunities Policy. An Equalities Impact Assessment is attached at Appendix 3.

Crime and Disorder

The grants criteria specifically cover crime and disorder with projects needing to outline how the proposed project reduces the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour and promotes stronger, cohesive and balanced communities.

Sustainability

Many of the grants criteria are concerned with sustainability.

Key Decision: Yes

Background Papers: None

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Part B

Review of Strategic Partner Scheme

1. Officers undertook a full review in 2017 of the current Strategic Partner Grant Scheme, looking at its financial support to community and voluntary organisations. The review included information taken from a consultation with all current Strategic Partners and an analysis of delivery against the corporate objectives.
2. The findings showed that for many years the Council has allocated funding to support the delivery of services across the borough by key voluntary and community sector organisations and groups. The majority of these organisations became Strategic Partners after delivering a particular piece of work or service on the Council's behalf on an ongoing basis. As a Strategic Partner they have received an agreed level of funding based on a Service Level Agreement (SLA).
3. Following the consultation and review it was agreed:
 - That grants will be awarded for two years and then reviewed to avoid running a rolling programme and allow for any changes in priorities. Year 2 funding will be subject to monitoring and evaluation of Year 1 delivery against Service Level Agreement (SLA.)
 - That all organisations wishing to access the Strategic Partner Grant Scheme will need to complete the application form and will be assessed against the evaluation criteria. That the Council's corporate objectives will continue to serve as the overarching framework for the Strategic Partners priorities.
 - That Strategic Partners are expected to demonstrate:
 - Organisational robustness
 - That they are viable, sustainable organisations that have the resources/commitment to undertake these responsibilities
 - Produce a two-year Business or Development Plan, which includes systems for effective financial management and sustainability
 - That they can demonstrate that they do not directly duplicate services already delivered by other Strategic Partners
 - That they can deliver against a minimum of 5 of the Council's Strategic Objectives
4. As part of the 2020/21 and 2021/22 process a review of existing Strategic Partner outcomes against the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives was undertaken and it was established that all existing Strategic Partners,

excluding Charnwood Twenty Twenty and Rosebery Community Centre, were still playing a key role in enhancing service delivery and were still relevant and appropriate as a Council Strategic Partner. (Appendix 2).

5. All current Strategic Partners, apart from Charnwood Twenty Twenty, were notified of the application process and funding levels. A Strategic Partner Grant Application Form, along with guidance notes were sent out with an accompanying letter highlighting the maximum amounts that would be awarded during 2020/21 and 2021/22 to each organisation.
6. Charnwood Twenty Twenty, had already informed the Grants Panel, that due to a reduction in the level of service they are providing locally, that they no longer feel that they meet the criteria for being a Strategic Partner and therefore have withdrawn as a Strategic Partner. In addition, the Council's Voluntary and Community Sector Development Officer has been working with Rosebery Community Centre on their business plan and as a result they have also decided not to reapply to be a Strategic Partner going forward. Both of these Strategic Partnerships with the Council will end at the end of March 2020.
7. In addition, Citizens Advice Bureau, have previously received a separate annual grant to deliver specialist money management and debt advice work, it has been decided that going forward that this will be amalgamated with their Strategic Partner Grant and be awarded for the two years.
8. Appendix 1 provides detail of the current Strategic Partners and proposed grant amounts for 2020/21 and 2021/22.

Strategic Partner Grant Scheme Application Process

9. The application process required the following:
 - That each organisation has a maximum amount that can be awarded
 - That the award is for two years, subject to evaluation after year one
 - That each organisation must meet at least five of the Council's Corporate Plan Objectives
 - That the organisation has a robust two-year business plan
 - That the organisation delivers its services directly into Charnwood
10. All applications are assessed against two measures of need: how the project/service delivers the Council's aims and objectives in meeting identified community needs and the organisational need of the Council's grant funding to enable the project/service to succeed. Both measures seek to demonstrate the value for money to be obtained in providing grant funding. Twelve criteria are used to assess community need based on the aims and objectives set out in the Corporate Plan and nine criteria are used for organisational assessment.

11. How does your project promote stronger, cohesive and balanced communities (in particular encouraging people from different backgrounds to get along together)?

- How does your project promote well-supported volunteering opportunities?
- How does your project promote health and well-being (in particular promoting healthy eating, physical activity, sexual health and reduced substance misuse)?
- How does your project promote and support improved mental health and emotional wellbeing?
- How does your project reduce the impact of crime and anti-social behaviour?
- How does your project improve the quality of life of people living in priority neighbourhoods?
- How does your project improve the well-being of residents through acknowledging their diverse needs?
- How does your project enable children, young people and older people to make a positive contribution to the communities in which they live?
- How does your project enable older people to live independent lives?
- How does your project promote access of local people to green spaces and the countryside?
- How does your project add value to Charnwood's commitment to reduce the impact of climate change?
- How does your project help promote local businesses and farming to prosper and develop vibrant towns and villages and support rural enterprise?

12. Nine criteria are for the Organisational Assessment. Organisations must demonstrate that their service/projects are prepared and managed well and will be encouraged to explore other funding sources where appropriate. This section has been modified from that used for the Community Development Grant Scheme to reflect what we would expect from Strategic Partners.

- That the organisation has identified a realistic total cost and timetable for the service/project that the grant is sort for? (Demonstrates that costs and timescales have been researched)
- Has provided evidence of a robust two-year business plan?
- Has demonstrated that the organisation has capacity to deliver the service/project effectively and within the agreed timescales.
- Has demonstrated that the service/project provides value for money?
- That the application has demonstrated that the service/project is not duplicated by another organisation?
 - Has joint working been considered
 - Has evidence shown how the work is different from others
- That the application provides strong evidence of how delivery of the service/project will be monitored
 - How outcomes will be monitored
 - What statistical information can be provided

- How feedback will be collected by 'users'
- Other evidence that can be provided
- That the balances and reserves demonstrate the stability of the organisation? (Demonstrates that it follows relevant guidance on maintaining general balances, and reserves that are earmarked reserves reflect its long-term strategy and has considered whether it can fund the activity from its balances.)
- What proportion of the cost of the service/project is the Council being asked to fund? (Demonstrates that the level of funding sought from the Council is justified.)
- Geographical location (No specific conditions or targets will be applied to grant awards, but the assessment of need will take the geographical distribution of grants across the Borough into account)

13. Applications are assessed qualitatively against these criteria and rated high, medium or low. These ratings are converted to a score on the following basis which rewards those applications which rate highly in meeting community need and provide a maximum possible score of 117.

Table 1 – Conversion of rankings into scores

| Ranking | Community Need Score | Organisation Need Score |
|---------------|----------------------|-------------------------|
| HIGH | 6 | 5 |
| MEDIUM | 2 | 3 |
| LOW | 1 | 1 |
| Maximum Score | 72 | 45 |

Levels for funding

| Score | Level of funding |
|---------------|------------------------------------|
| Less than 35 | Nil |
| 35 – | Some of grant applied grant for |
| More than 50+ | Most or all of funding applied for |

14. The Grants Panel received the applications and completed the Assessment Forms using the scoring method described above. In addition, all Strategic Partners were invited in to present their application to the Grants Panel, which gave the Grants Panel the opportunity to raise any additional questions they had and seek clarification on anything that was unclear.

15. One of the requirements for being considered for Strategic Partners funding is that the organisation can demonstrate that they deliver against at least five of the Corporate Plan objectives.

Appendix 2 shows the Grants Panel's assessment of delivery against the Council's corporate objectives for each of the applicants.

Strategic Partner Grant Scheme Applications

16. Nine applications for funding were invited, received and assessed. They have been assessed against the Strategic Partner Grant Scheme criteria and all nine have been recommended for support.

Grants Panel Recommendations

17. A summary of the applications and comments made by the Grants Panel are set out below:

Charnwood Citizens' Advice Bureau – Score 75.8 - Recommendation to award up to £90,928 (£62,428 for CAB element and up to £28,500 for specialist money management and debt advice work) in 2020/21 (amount for 2021/22 to be confirmed and subject to budget approval)

18. Aims are to inform and advise people of their rights and responsibilities and to influence policy makers through social policy work. The bureau deals with around 5,000 clients per year with over 13,000 issues. Debt, welfare benefits and employment are consistently the most common areas of enquiry.
19. Charnwood CAB is seeking funding for their 'core' service. This includes clients being offered a 'Gateway Assessment' (brief assessment of their advice needs), and referrals to Volunteer Advisers.
20. The organisation has 5 paid staff, and 52 trained volunteer advisers and support staff.
21. Will enhance quality of life, especially those with long term health problems, by improving socio-economic conditions. Will combat poverty by maximising income.
22. Significant volunteering opportunities which develops people's confidence and skills, which are then transferable.
23. The organisation has applied for £82,428 (£62,428 for the Citizens Advice element and currently £20,000 for their Specialist Money Management and Debt Advice (SMMDA) element). Charnwood CAB, have previously received a separate annual grant to deliver SMMDA work, it has been decided that going forward that this will be amalgamated with their Strategic Partner Grant and be awarded for the two years. At the time of applying, due to budgets not yet being confirmed, Charnwood CAB were given an indicative figure of £20,000 for the SMMDA element, as this covered the associated staffing costs. There is a budget of up to £28,500 to fund this element of work, discussions with regard to this are currently still ongoing with Charnwood CAB and a final amount is to be confirmed. This element covers the more in depth debt casework supporting individuals in the borough that have complex debt issues.

24. The officer assessment scored this scheme at 75.8 and recommends that a grant of £90,928 is awarded for 2020/21. This includes £62,428 for Core costs, and up to £28,500 towards the Specialist Money Management and Debt Advice element. Funding for 2021/22 will be confirmed following an evaluation at the end of Year 1 and will be subject to budget approval. This award is subject to the organisation continuing to commit to outreach sessions at Syston and targeting support in Priority Neighbourhoods.

25. Panel comments on Application:

- The Panel recognise the importance of work undertaken by Charnwood CAB, and the good outcomes achieved through supporting residents in the Borough;
- The Panel recognise the extensive supported volunteer opportunities that are provided to enable the organisation to deliver services;
- The Panel notes the financial benefits gained by residents through benefit claims, appeals and write-off of debts and the positive impact this has on an individual's health, both physical and mental.

Clockwise Credit Union – Score 62.4 - Recommendation to award £8,298 in 2020/21 (amount for 2021/22 to be confirmed and subject to budget approval)

26. Clockwise is a not-for-profit Credit Union in Leicester City and Leicestershire able to offer banking services providing affordable loans, safe savings and ethical financial products and services.

27. Clockwise has been established since 1992, are members of the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) and Financial Ombudsman so members' money is assured.

28. In September 2019 Clockwise had over 16,000 adult members and 800 junior members.

29. Clockwise employs 26 full and part-time staff running the main office in Leicester. Charnwood residents have online access and access to a 'branch' service in Loughborough.

30. Clockwise have been working with the Council since 2014 to ensure that access to credit union services are provided within Charnwood. Since that time, they have refined their offer and are now delivering two access sessions a week, one at the Library and one at the Council offices. In addition, they have been working closely with the Council to drive their membership and target services in priority neighbourhoods. They are also working closely with DWP.

31. The organisation has applied for £8,298, with Clockwise themselves match funding this with other financial support.

32. The officer assessment scored this scheme at 62.4 and recommends that a grant of £8,298 is awarded for 2020/21. Funding for 2021/22 will be confirmed following an evaluation at the end of Year 1 and will be subject to budget approval.

33. Panel comments on Application:

- The Panel supports community access to Credit Union services in Charnwood;
- The Panel recognises the importance of their work to assist those residents who are excluded from mainstream banking and are being forced into high cost borrowing;
- The Panel recognises the benefit of the organisation and partnership with the Borough Council, with their work which potentially avoids evictions, and Council Tax arrears;
- The Panel notes that Clockwise Credit Union is a leading Credit Union group, that are continually looking to improve their service.

Equality Action – Score 64.2 – Recommendation to award £20,978 in 2020/21 (amount for 2021/22 to be confirmed and subject to budget approval)

34. Aims to eliminate discrimination, campaign for equality of opportunity, promote good relations between all persons in the Borough and Leicestershire.

35. Provides advice and information mainly on welfare benefits, health, housing, adult social care, and immigration.

36. The grant will be used towards running costs and will enable them to maintain the delivery of their key services in Charnwood, including advice and information, particularly to those facing barriers to accessing vital information.

37. 3,500 people benefit from community cohesion events each year.

38. The organisation has 8 staff, 12 committee members and 6 volunteers at present. There are up to 50 volunteers when co-ordinating events such as the Loughborough Mela.

39. The organisation:

- Promotes community cohesion
- Empowers women and men with South Asian background
- Builds confidence and self-esteem.

40. The organisation has applied for £20,978.

41. The officer assessment scored this scheme at 64.2 and recommends that a grant of £20,978 is awarded for 2020/21. Funding for 2021/22 will be confirmed following an evaluation at the end of Year 1 and will be subject to budget approval.

42. Panel comments on Application:

- The Panel recognises that the organisation provides positive targeted support for Black and Asian communities, and continues to work towards engagement with other communities, including beginning to work towards equality for LGBT communities;
- The Panel recognises that the group needs core funding as a base, however also recognises that there is a need for them to look at ongoing sustainability. Officers will continue to work with them.

Fearon Community Association – Score 81.2 – Recommendation to award £30,489 in 2020/21 (amount for 2021/22 to be confirmed and subject to budget approval)

43. Fearon Community Association exists to maintain and improve the quality of life for people in East Loughborough, especially Hastings/Lemyngton wards, and promote equality of opportunity between individuals and groups of people from different backgrounds. The venue is used for community and private events.

44. The grant will cover running costs of the various projects/ areas of work/ services offered, including youth provision, health, advice and outreach to BAME community, community learning, communication and cohesion.

45. The organisation has 2 staff, 3 committee members, and 14 volunteers.

46. The organisation provides the following services and caters for:

- Older people – to maintain / regain their independence
- Vulnerable adults – improved self-esteem and engagement with adult social-services
- Young people – provides a meeting point and fills gaps in local youth services, provides diversionary activities
- Unemployed people – increase skills base and employability
- People with drugs / alcohol problems – minimises the negative impact of substance misuse.

47. The organisation has applied for £30,489.

48. The officer assessment scored this scheme at 81.2 and recommends that a grant of £30,489 is awarded for 2020/21. Funding for 2021/22 will be confirmed

following an evaluation at the end of Year 1 and will be subject to budget approval.

49. Panel comments on Application:

- The Panel recognises that the organisation is a key community facility in a Priority Neighbourhood;
- There are a wide range of activities and services meeting the needs within their locality, and the facilities are well used;
- There is a strong commitment and passion to help the most vulnerable.
- The ethos of the Association has the community at the heart of everything they do, and this is strongly balanced with the need to generate income.

Gorse Covert Community Association – Score 57.5 - Recommendation to award £20,432 in 2020/21 (amount for 2021/22 to be confirmed subject to budget approval)

50. The Community Centre is situated on the edge of Loughborough West Priority Neighbourhood area. It offers a wide range of activities over a 7-day programme through third party providers, catering for pre-natal to elderly residents in the immediate area, Loughborough and Charnwood.

51. It aims to provide and promote social, recreational educational and community development support for local people.

52. The grant will be used towards core running costs, enabling the centre to expand and promote services to the local neighbourhood and targeted work with the more vulnerable and hard to reach communities.

53. There are 9 members of staff and 10 volunteers including Trustees (75% of the current user groups are serviced by volunteers).

54. Health and well-being issues are supported through provision of the following groups:

- The Alheimers Society
- Parkinsons UK
- Stroke club
- Coping with Cancer
- Breathe Easy
- Let's Talk (one-to-one sessions for mental health issues)

55. The majority of sessions are universal, however a number are targeted at specific groups, such as Breathe Easy for people with respiratory issues, a playgroup and toddler groups are provided for young families, and the Youth service targets young people aged 14+. Services are also provided where older people are empowered to become an active part of the community.

56. The organisation has applied for £20,432.

57. The officer assessment scored this scheme at 57.5 and recommends that a grant of £20,432 is awarded for 2020/21. Funding for 2021/22 will be confirmed following an evaluation at the end of Year 1 and will be subject to budget approval.

58. Panel comments on Application:

- The Panel feels that the Community Centre has a good relationship with the community groups/individuals that currently use the facilities;
- There are a wide range of positive activities/sessions provided, and the Panel recognises that the organisation is trying to reach out to other groups/businesses and members of the community but there is a need for further community connectivity;
- The Panel recognises that there is further work to be done to improve signage to the Community Centre;
- The Panel feel that there is further work to be done with the organisation to strengthen their Business Plan and funding strategy;
- The Panel would encourage the organisation to continue to be involved with the local Consortium of community centres which is being led by John Storer Charnwood.

John Storer Charnwood – Score 90.3 – Recommendation to award £86,656 in 2020/21 (amount for 2021/22 to be confirmed and subject to budget approval)

59. John Storer Charnwood (JSC) employs mainly part-time staff and co-ordinates hundreds of volunteers to provide services and activities from and at John Storer House (JSH).

60. The Strategic Partner grant covers two elements, approximately £40,700 of the grant contributing towards the overall running costs of John Storer House and the remaining £45,956 being utilised to support the John Storer Charnwood element which includes:

- VCS support, development and representation
- VCS forums and representation
- Outward facing strategic management and participation in partnership working within the wider community with key partners in the third sector, statutory and private sectors
- Volunteering support, training, pathway development and promotion within JSC, but also within the wider community sectors
- Facilitation of three well-being groups which meet monthly around the Borough
- Development and delivery of a subsidised programme of training suitable for all VCS groups

61. The organisation has 27 staff, 12 committee members, and 188 volunteers. 150-200 people use the building daily.
62. Open to the public Mondays to Saturdays, and available for private room hire, group conferences etc. It is a well-being centre for all; activities and services enrich lives through mind, body and spirit.
63. Community transport service assists the elderly and disabled and enables them to attend activities in Loughborough and local places, including JSH.
64. The organisation has applied for £86,656.
65. The officer assessment scored this scheme at 90.3 and recommends that a grant of £86,656 is awarded for 2020/21. Funding for 2021/22 will be confirmed following an evaluation at the end of Year 1 and will be subject to budget approval.
66. Panel comments on Application:
- The Panel feel that this is a strong application, and is high scoring against the criteria of the scheme;
 - The Panel recognise the passion, energy and commitment given by the organisation's leaders and trustees;
 - The Panel recognise that this is a key community-based provision with evidence of strong partnership working, meeting a number of CBC priorities;
 - The Panel are pleased to hear about the Consortium of community centres that John Storer Charnwood is currently leading, and feels this will be of great benefit to other community centres in the area;
 - Panel need to be clear about what roles the John Storer House and VAC elements will play;
 - Panel would encourage the organisation to continue to work with Syston Volunteer Centre.

Shepshed Volunteer Centre – Score 73.8 – Recommendation to award £9,781 in 2020/21 (amount for 2021/22 to be confirmed and subject to budget approval)

67. Shepshed Volunteer Centre (SVC) employs 3 staff including a part-time Centre Co-ordinator, and a part-time Administrative Assistant. There are 10 committee members and 59 volunteers fulfilling over 100 roles.
68. Provides services for vulnerable residents of Shepshed and surrounding area, enabling them to maintain independent lives in their own homes. Services include: a social car scheme, gardening scheme and befriending scheme.
69. A grant would contribute towards core funding for all activities, along with £7,000 from Shepshed Town Council. This includes salary, running costs and servicing and replacing of equipment.

70. The organisation:

- Enables inclusion of all disadvantaged communities and groups
- Enables disabled and elderly to remain independent and to stay in their own homes
- Encourages social cohesion, and community engagement
- Reduces isolation.

71. The organisation has applied for £9,781.

72. The officer assessment scored this scheme at 73.8 and recommends that a grant of £9,781 is awarded for 2020/21, and funding for 2021/22 will be confirmed following an evaluation at the end of Year 1 and will be subject to budget approval.

73. Panel comments on Application:

- Panel would like the Business Plan for John Storer Charnwood to include a separate section for Shepshed Volunteer Centre;
- The Panel recognises that the organisation provides a wide variety of community projects, and is pro-active in its approach to volunteering;
- The organisation provides a local infrastructure support for Shepshed;
- Strong links and support from John Storer Charnwood.

Living Without Abuse – Score 75 – Recommendation to award £17,165 in 2020/21 (amount for 2021/22 to be confirmed and subject to budget approval)

74. Living Without Abuse exists to relieve the distress and suffering felt by anyone who has experienced any form of domestic abuse.

75. Provides one to one outreach services to male and female survivors, offering information, advice and support on all issues relating to domestic abuse, including legal options, housing, safety planning, health and well-being, and issues relating to children and young people.

76. A grant would be used to support their domestic abuse outreach service.

77. The organisation has 23 staff, 3 committee members, and 8 volunteers.

78. The organisation provides counselling / emotional support offered to service users once the domestic abuse issues become historic, practical and emotional support, encourages victims to report to the police.

79. Prevents homelessness, increases safety, develops self-esteem and confidence.

80. The organisation has applied for £17,165.

81. The officer assessment scored this scheme at 75 and recommends that a grant of £17,165 is awarded for 2020/21. Funding for 2021/22 will be confirmed following an evaluation at the end of Year 1 and will be subject to budget approval.

82. Panel comments on Application:

- The Panel recognise the importance of this organisation and the work they do with vulnerable individuals;
- The organisation has robust evidence of delivery, and their ability to demonstrate outcomes is a strength;
- The Panel recognise there are insufficient funds to meet demands, and in order to keep waiting times down, the organisation needs to ensure that funding is secure.

Syston and District Volunteer Centre – Score 54.3 - Recommendation to award £9,781 in 2020/21 (amount for 2021/22 to be confirmed and subject to budget approval)

83. Objectives are to have a pool of volunteers to provide support and develop new opportunities for the benefit of the local community and those in need across the South Charnwood area.

84. To recruit, support and train volunteers.

85. The organisation currently provides:

- Social car and community mini-bus
- Monthly community lunch
- Wheelchair and mobility aid hire
- MIDAS mini bus training

86. The grant would provide some financial security while allowing the Centre to continue providing an excellent service. It will allow the business to grow and for them to diversify into other areas, providing further volunteering opportunities.

87. The organisation has 3 full time and 3 part time staff, 9 committee members, and 30 volunteers.

88. Positive outcomes:

- It improves life chances for vulnerable individuals and families
- Older people empowered to play an active role in the community
- Opportunities for residents to improve their health and well-being

89. The organisation has applied for £9,781.

90. The officer assessment scored this scheme at 54.3 and recommends that a grant of £9,781 is awarded for 2020/21. Funding for 2021/22 will be confirmed following an evaluation at the end of Year 1 and will be subject to budget approval. The Grants Panel are recommending that a Strategic Partner Grant be awarded in principle to Syston Volunteer Centre, subject to them continuing to work with the Council and receipt of evidence demonstrating that they have revisited their business plan and are moving towards further community engagement / volunteering activities, by the end of March 2021 (end of Year 1) and that the Head of Neighbourhood Services be given delegated authority, in consultation with the Lead Member, to determine the most appropriate way forward.

91. Panel comments on Application:

- The Panel felt that the amount of direct community work and development of wider volunteering has reduced in the past two years and that the organisation currently is only operating as a community transport organisation.
- The Panel feel that with a new Manager who is open to suggestions, and eager to work with Officers and other organisations to develop their remit, there is potential for this to be revisited;
- Provides a service for the South Charnwood area;
- The Panel would like the organisation to focus on progression, delivering wider community projects / activities other than transport, in line with other Strategic Partners.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Strategic Partner Grants

Appendix 2: Delivery Against Corporate Objectives

Appendix 3: Equality Impact Assessment

APPENDIX 1

| Organisation | Maximum 2020/21 (Year 1) | Maximum 2021/22 (Year 2) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Charnwood Citizens Advice Bureau | Up to £90,928 | Up to £90,928 |
| Clockwise Credit Union | £8,298 | £8,298 |
| Equality Action | £20,978 | £20,978 |
| Fearon Hall Community Association | £30,489 | £30,489 |
| Gorse Covert Community Association | £20,432 | £20,432 |
| John Storer Charnwood | £86,656 | £86,656 |
| Shepshed Volunteer Centre | £9,781 | £9,781 |
| Living Without Abuse | £17,165 | £17,165 |
| Syston Volunteer Centre* | £9,781 | £9,781 |

Charnwood Borough Council

Equality Impact Assessment 'Knowing the needs of your customers and employees'

■ Background

An Equality Impact Assessment is an improvement tool. It will assist you in ensuring that you have thought about the needs and impacts of your service/policy/function in relation to the protected characteristics. It enables a systematic approach to identifying and recording gaps and actions.

■ Legislation- Equality Duty

As a local authority that provides services to the public, Charnwood Borough Council has a legal responsibility to ensure that we can demonstrate having paid due regard to the need to:

- ✓ Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- ✓ Advance Equality of Opportunity
- ✓ Foster good relations

For the following protected characteristics:

1. Age
2. Disability
3. Gender reassignment
4. Marriage and civil partnership
5. Pregnancy and maternity
6. Race
7. Religion and belief
8. Sex (Gender)
9. Sexual orientation

What is prohibited?

1. Direct Discrimination
2. Indirect Discrimination
3. Harassment
4. Victimisation
5. Discrimination by association
6. Discrimination by perception
7. Pregnancy and maternity discrimination
8. Discrimination arising from disability
9. Failing to make reasonable adjustments

■ **Step 1 – Introductory information**

| | |
|---|--------------------------|
| Title of the policy | Strategic Partner Grants |
| Name of lead officer and others undertaking this assessment | Julie Robinson |
| Date EIA started | November 2019 |
| Date EIA completed | December 2019 |

■ **Step 2 – Overview of policy/function being assessed:**

| |
|---|
| Outline: What is the purpose of this policy? (Specify aims and objectives) |
| <p>Charnwood Borough Council recognises the value and contribution of individuals, voluntary sector organisations and other community-led projects and the benefits they provide to the residents of Charnwood.</p> <p>Through our Charnwood grant schemes we provide a range of grants including Strategic Partner grants to help organisations, groups and individuals access the funding support they need.</p> <p>Strategic Partners are those organisations are those organisations who contribute significantly to delivering key services that meet the Council's corporate objectives.</p> <p>It is the Councils aim to ensure the grants process is inclusive of all community groups and funding supports projects targeting individuals across a range of protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.</p> |
| What specific group/s is the policy designed to affect/impact and what is the intended change or outcome for them? |
| <p>It is the Councils aim to ensure that the grants process is inclusive of all community groups and funding supports projects targeting individuals/ residents across a range of protected characteristics, as outlined in the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>Analysis is therefore undertaken to ensure that the grant are distributed in a reasonable and proportionate manner.</p> |
| Which groups have been consulted as part of the creation or review of the policy? |
| <p>Evaluation takes place on successful Strategic Partner applications to analyse whether there any gaps with regards to the protected characteristics in order to ensure the grants process is fair and equal to all. In particular analysis is undertaken to determine any barriers which may prevent specific community groups/ communities of interest accessing provision.</p> |

Step 3 – What we already know and where there are gaps

List any existing information/data do you have/monitor about different diverse groups in relation to this policy? Such as in relation to age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation etc.

Data/information such as:

- Consultation
- Previous Equality Impact Assessments
- Demographic information
- Anecdotal and other evidence

- Analysis of Strategic Partner applications and monitoring and evaluation data and information

What does this information / data tell you about diverse groups? If you do not hold or have access to any data/information on diverse groups, what do you need to begin collating / monitoring? (Please list)

The information tells us that the voluntary sector organisations supported provide a range of services that acknowledge individuals from protected characteristics.

It is acknowledged that some of the voluntary sector organisations support individuals with multiple characteristics and those projects supporting the wider community have a wide range of beneficiaries.

Where possible equalities information is provided as part of the monitoring data from voluntary sector organisations that are awarded a grant by the Council. There are a number of organisations that specifically cover age, disability, race, religion, sex.

Step 4 – Do we need to seek the views of others? If so, who?

In light of the answers you have given in Step 2, do you need to consult with specific groups to identify needs / issues? If not please explain why.

However, at this stage of analysis it is felt the information currently held is sufficient to analysis trends and determine any barriers or negative impacts.

Step 5 – Assessing the impact

In light of any data/consultation/information and your own knowledge and awareness, please identify whether the policy has a positive or negative impact on the individuals or community groups (including what barriers these individuals or groups may face) who identify with any 'protected characteristics' and provide an explanation for your decision (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

Comments

| | |
|--|---|
| Age | There is a reasonable proportion of grant funding awarded to projects relating to Age. Of the grants awarded, there is a reasonable proportionate spread between projects for older and younger people. The process has therefore created a positive impact in relation to the protected characteristic of Age. |
| Disability (Physical, visual, hearing, learning disabilities, mental health) | There is a reasonable proportion of grant funding awarded to projects relating to disability. In addition it is acknowledged that some of the projects funded are cross- cutting and support individuals with multiple characteristics. Therefore, creating further positive impacts for people with disabilities. The process has therefore created a positive impact overall in relation to the protected characteristic of Disability. |
| Gender Reassignment (Transgender) | Neutral Impact - No projects have been specifically funded to support the protected characteristic of Gender Reassignment. In addition it is acknowledged that some of the projects funded are cross- cutting and support individuals with multiple characteristics. |
| Race | There is a reasonably large amount of grant funding awarded to projects relating to Race. In additional it is acknowledged that some of the projects funded are cross- cutting and support individuals with multiple characteristics. The process has therefore created a positive impact overall in relation to the protected characteristic of Race. |
| Religion or Belief (Includes no belief) | Whilst Charnwood Grants do not specifically support religious groups/ activities, it does provide funding to faith groups who are delivering activities for the wider community. The impact is therefore neutral with regards to the protected characteristic of religion or belief with the acknowledged that wider benefits are created for the wider community. |
| Sex (Gender) | There is some grant funding awarded to projects relating to Gender. In addition it is acknowledged that some of the projects funded are cross- cutting and support individuals with multiple characteristics. The process has therefore created a positive impact in relation to the protected characteristic of Gender. |
| Sexual Orientation | Neutral Impact - No projects have been specifically funded to support the protected characteristic of Sexual Orientation. In addition it is acknowledged that some of the projects funded are cross - cutting and support individuals with multiple characteristics. |
| Other protected groups (Pregnancy & maternity, marriage & civil partnership) | There is some grant funding awarded to projects relating to Pregnancy & Maternity. In addition it is acknowledged that |

| | |
|--|--|
| | some of the projects funded are cross-cutting and support individuals with multiple characteristics. The process has therefore created a positive impact in relation to the protected characteristic of Pregnancy & Maternity. |
| Other socially excluded groups (carers, low literacy, priority neighbourhoods, health inequalities, rural isolation, asylum seeker and refugee communities etc.) | The grants which focus on the wider community have a wide range of benefits, particularly for residents from priority neighbourhoods or areas of deprivation. |

Where there are potential barriers, negative impacts identified and/ or barriers or impacts are unknown, please outline how you propose to minimise all negative impact or discrimination.

Please note:

- If you have identified adverse impact or discrimination that is illegal, you are required to take action to remedy this immediately.
- Additionally, if you have identified adverse impact that is justifiable or legitimate, you will need to consider what actions can be taken to mitigate its effect on those groups of people.

No negative impacts or potential barriers have been identified. However it is acknowledged that specific marketing / promotion for the protected characteristics of Gender Reassignment and Sexual Orientation may be required.

Summarise your findings and give an overview as to whether the policy will meet Charnwood Borough Council's responsibilities in relation to equality and diversity (please refer to the general duties on the front page).

It is the opinion that the Strategic Partner Grants comply with Charnwood Borough Council's equality and diversity responsibilities. It will further promote equal opportunities and achieve positive outcomes.

Step 6- Monitoring, evaluation and review

Are there processes in place to review the findings of this Assessment and make appropriate changes? In particular, how will you monitor potential barriers and any positive/ negative impact?

Monitoring will continue on a quarterly and annual basis to assess the grant applications that are successful. Continuous monitoring and analysis will aim to identify gaps which may potentially highlight barriers or negative impacts towards specific community groups/ communities of interest.

Further equalities monitoring will be explored for those projects which have applied and are deemed unsuccessful, for the further identification of issues or potential barriers.

How will the recommendations of this assessment be built into wider planning and review processes? e.g. policy reviews, annual plans and use of performance management systems.

Where barriers/ negative impacts are identified, the mitigating action and progress against this will be included within the relevant service plan.

Step 7- Action Plan

Please include any identified concerns/actions/issues in this action plan:

The issues identified should inform your Service Plan and, if appropriate, your Consultation Plan

| Reference Number | Action | Responsible Officer | Target Date |
|------------------|--|---------------------|-------------|
| 001 | Continue to monitor the Grants on a quarterly and annual basis to assess the grant applications that are both successful and unsuccessful. | J. Robinson | March 2021 |

- Step 8- Who needs to know about the outcomes of this assessment and how will they be informed?

| | Who needs to know (Please tick) | How they will be informed (we have a legal duty to publish EIA's) |
|--|------------------------------------|--|
| Employees | ✓ | This EIA will be published on the Council's website. |
| Service users | ✓ | |
| Partners and stakeholders | ✓ | |
| Others | ✓ | |
| To ensure ease of access, what other communication needs/concerns are there? | ✓ | |

Please delete as appropriate

I agree with this assessment / action plan

If *disagree*, state action/s required, reasons and details of who is to carry them out with timescales: N/A

Signed (Service Head): Julie Robinson

Date: 10.12.2019

[Please send completed & signed assessment to Suzanne Kinder for publishing.](#)