
STRATEGIC GRANT PERFORMANCE REPORT

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. To inform Scrutiny of the performance delivered by this grant programme and to update members about progress with the infrastructure review implementation.

Summary

2. It was agreed by Scrutiny following the work of the Scrutiny task and finish group last year that they needed to be kept informed of progress with the infrastructure review and of delivery by all organisations currently in receipt of Strategic Grant.
3. This report provides performance information and analysis but also informs Scrutiny of the implementation of the infrastructure review work that has taken place since the last report to Scrutiny in September 2014.

Recommendation

4. It is recommended that:
 - (a) Scrutiny note the performance report and that they acknowledge the work that has been achieved through this grant programme
 - (b) Scrutiny agrees to receive a future report in June 2015 to examine end of year performance and options for future delivery.

**Catherine Whitehead
Assistant Chief Executive**

Background Papers

- (i) Darlington Borough Council Cabinet Paper dated 1 July 2013
- (ii) Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Paper 10 December 2013
- (iii) Health and Partnerships Scrutiny Paper 15 September 2014

Mary Hall : Extension 6053

S17 Crime and Disorder	There are no direct benefits for crime and disorder but many of the issues of this report are of secondary benefit in reducing crime and disorder.
Health and Well Being	Many of the Strategic Grant outcomes support improved health and well-being.
Carbon Impact	There are no carbon impacts
Diversity	Some of the outcomes for organisations in receipt of Strategic Grant support access to services for protected characteristic groups
Wards Affected	All wards are affected by delivery funded through Strategic Grant.
Groups Affected	The whole population will potentially be impacted upon by the use of Strategic Grant
Budget and Policy Framework	Strategic Grants are part of the support given to the Voluntary Sector and are also part of the Medium Term Financial Plan budget proposals.
Key Decision	This is not a key decision.
Urgent Decision	This is not an urgent decision.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	Strategic Grants support a number of vulnerable people in Darlington and will help to reduce inequalities.
Efficiency	This report aims to identify value for money.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

5. Each organisation in receipt of strategic grant was asked to submit a performance report for the period of the year.
6. The evidence provided by organisations has been analysed and summarised in **Appendix 1** of this report. It should be noted that this information is based on how organisations have met the outcomes and outputs required in the funding agreement. In some case other funding may have been levered in by the organisation and it is therefore difficult to identify how much of the delivery can be attributed solely to the Strategic Grant funding.
7. Organisations have delivered a wide range of outcomes throughout the year that have:
 - (a) Increased the number of active volunteers by over 65
 - (b) Brought in nearly £2,363,479 through benefit maximisation advice
 - (c) Involved 15 groups and 52 volunteers in environmental projects
 - (d) Prevented over 167 households becoming homeless
 - (e) Supported individuals to develop and to participate in their community and influence change at a national, regional and local level
8. All frontline organisations are continuing to perform or over perform and this is particularly the case where the welfare reform changes have triggered increased demand.
9. To achieve savings in the MTFP it is proposed to cease strategic grant funding to Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) from March 2015. This is to seize the opportunity to bring together advice provided under the Social Fund, Community switching and other contracts. This commissioning activity will take place in the Spring 2015. It is proposed that funding to CAB will be kept in place until the future commissioning arrangements are in place to maintain the current capacity and ensure that the needs of the residents of Darlington continue to be met.
10. It is proposed that funding for the other recipients of strategic grant with the exception of infrastructure support will be extended for a further 12 months at the current level to allow for a review of these services. This will need to link to work across the health and social care remit. This should take place in line with the development of well-being and prevention services and the intention to reduce demand on care services.

Infrastructure Support

11. An infrastructure review has taken place and this clarified what the sector and local authority need in terms of infrastructure support. These findings were presented to Scrutiny on 15 September 2015 together with the draft action plan for delivery of infrastructure. Following agreement at scrutiny the Assistant Chief Executive

presented this to the Board of Evolution on 7 October 2014. Changes were subsequently made but final sign off by Evolution Board has not yet taken place.

12. Council Officers and the Executive Director of Evolution have met to agree how activity would be evidenced. Each topic within the plan was dealt with independently and an agreed outcome noted, together with potential evidence. The action plan is to be delivered by the end of March 2015 and the final draft with a performance update from Evolution is attached at **Appendix 2**. It should be noted that this report has not yet been signed off by the Board of Evolution and therefore there are areas of the action plan where no information has been supplied.

Performance information

13. Performance information on the action plan shows:
 - (a) Evolution is planning a workshop with the sector in the New Year to clarify the sector view of what the vision and role of Evolution should be in the future.
 - (b) The Strategy and Development Group has had an initial meeting.. It was agreed that the next meeting would take place on 13 January 2015 and would concentrate on Children and Young People where it was identified there was an existing gap of provision with the voluntary sector
 - (c) Arrangements for representation on Darlington Partnership are being reviewed but broader representation will be agreed through the Strategy and Development Group. A Partnership Meetings page has been set up on Evolution website where it will be possible to see who sector representatives are, what the remit or Terms of Reference of the groups are and how to find out more about these opportunities.
 - (d) Mirus continues to be developed and Evolution and the local authority are encouraging the wider sector to add their information to this directory and update it. Mirus is live and performance information showed 134 vacancies on the system but not all of these are in Darlington.
 - (e) Resource information is available on Evolution website but will need to be expanded.
 - (f) Evolution helped two organisations to submit a funding bid. This was unsuccessful but only two projects in the country were funded.
14. Information was also provided about support offered to groups. A brief outline of the support offered is attached at **Appendix 3** and this has been anonymised so as not to show third party information. This shows that the key support requested is in relation to governance and funding. It should be noted that at present there is limited support available in Evolution for funding.
15. Some of the work done by Evolution is simple signposting but other work is complex and time consuming. Generally the sensitive pieces of work are the complex cases.

Next Steps

16. A paper will be presented to Cabinet in January to ask for agreement to interim arrangements to continue support to the Voluntary and Community Sector pending review of the remaining Strategic Grants that finish in March 2015.
17. Decisions about the future of infrastructure support will be taken in the Spring following delivery of the Action Plan and assessment of the contribution infrastructure support has made in the support and development of the sector. Consideration of the delivery required in the future and the method of delivery will take place between March to September.

Recommendations

18. Scrutiny are asked to:
 - (a) Discuss the report and progress against the action plan in relation to infrastructure.
 - (b) Agree to receive another report in June 2015 giving details of end of year performance and options for the future delivery of infrastructure support.