



Report of the North East Area Manager

North East (Inner) Area Committee

Date: 25th June 2007

Subject: Grant & Funding Advice Worker Update

Electoral Wards Affected:

Chapel Allerton
Moortown
Roundhay

Ward Members consulted
(referred to in report)

Specific Implications For:

Ethnic minorities

Women

Disabled people

Narrowing the Gap

Council
Function

Delegated Executive
Function available
for Call In

Delegated Executive
Function not available for
Call In Details set out in the
report

Executive Summary

This report provides the Area Committee with an evaluation of the Grant & Funding Advice Worker post, which has been funded through the Well-Being Fund. The report provides a summary of groups assisted, funding raised and an evaluation of the effectiveness of the post against the original objectives of the project.

Purpose Of This Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide an evaluation of the effectiveness of the Grant & Funding Advice Worker post. The initial objective of the post was to support elderly care groups in achieving long term sustainability and to move away from a grant dependent culture. This report evaluates the success of the post against this objective, along with a comparison to a similar post funded by the North West (Inner) Area Committee. In addition the report provides members with a summary of grants awarded under the K Fund, the ERDF funded grants scheme targeting Chapeltown and parts of Meanwood.

Background Information

2. The Area Committee agreed to fund a Grant & Funding Advice Worker and a contribution to the K Fund project in June 2005. The total Well-Being Fund contribution agreed in June 2005 was £75,317 spread across 3 financial years to support a post from November 2005 – November 2007.
3. The original objective of the post was initially to support elderly care networks in achieving long term sustainability and to move away from a grant dependent culture. This was agreed following discussions by the Voluntary and Community Support Working Group which included representatives from the elderly care support organisations. The remit of the post would then be extended to offering funding advice to all groups in the area. The post would also link with the Regeneration Resources Team Social Enterprise Advisors who advise on the expansion of social enterprises throughout the City.

Grant & Funding Advice Worker

4. The Grant & Funding Advice Worker role was set up to:
 - Signpost groups to appropriate funding sources and assist with the completion of application forms
 - Support the development of groups
 - Promote the best use of resources by proposing measures for streamlining service activity to avoid duplication of services
 - Promote best practice amongst groups through effective networking
5. The post was established as a 3 day per week role, with the other 2 days focusing on the K Fund role. Paul Auber was appointed in February 2006 and worked fulltime covering both roles until leaving on April 11th 2007.
6. During his 13 and half months in post, the following services were provided:
 - Direct support via email, telephone and face-to-face to groups on selecting grant sources, completing funding applications, generating supporting information including development plans for funders and providing model organisational policies, constitutions, agenda and minute templates
 - Fundraising training sessions
 - Referrals to other Voluntary Community Sector (VCS) business advice agencies

- Distribution of two separate UK wide funding digest updates, twice-monthly

Achievements

7. The following table summarises the outputs and outcomes of the Grant & Funding Advice role. The full list of organisations assisted is attached in appendix 1.

12-Months Monitoring (February 2006 – March 2007)

OUTPUT	NUMBERS	COMMENTS
Number of direct enquiries	70	Across Moortown, Chapel Allerton & Roundhay
Number of groups receiving direct support	39	At least one face to face meeting held with the organisation.
Number of groups receiving funding updates	57	Funding updates sent to groups with email address. 14 separate updates sent out in the 12 month period.
Number of groups receiving model policies	8	37 separate policies provided
Value of these policies	£12,950	Based on an average price of £350 per policy, which is private sector rates
Number of groups receiving bespoke constitutions	3	
Value of these constitutions	£1,050	At an average of £350 each based on private sector rates
Number of groups assisted with short business plan documentation	8	Development statement setting out short-term plans, issues, opportunities, plan costing and budget. Suitable for small-medium fundraising and, as a basis for intensive business plans.
Value of these business plans	£2,800	At an average of £350 each based on private sector rates
Number of groups receiving training	10	Facilitated in association with Leeds NE Homes(LNEH) for the primary benefit of their tenant & resident associations across the area.
Number of groups receiving business advice	3	3-5 year business plans and budgets
Number of groups referred to other VCS business advice agencies	12	Including Resourcing the Community(RtC), West Yorkshire Community Accounts Company(WYCAS) and the social enterprise unit; Sustainable Futures
Extra funding attracted into the inner north east area as a result of applications made by organisations assisted by the post	£35,000	Made up of: Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund £5,000 Sports Lottery £5,000 Sustainable Futures £5,000 Heritage Lottery Fund £20,000
Extra funding pending as a result of applications made by organisations assisted by the post	£55,000	Made up of: Princes Trust £5,000 Sports Lottery £50,000
Total quantifiable benefits	£106,800	

8. Of the 39 groups receiving direct support over the 12-months, 32 were self-referrals as a result of publicising the service and 6 were referred by ward councillors.
9. For the 12-months the post has brought in £35,000 to the area, made up of £5,000 from Sport Lottery for the Iftiin Somalian Welfare Association, £5,000 from Faith Communities Capacity Building Fund for Milun Women's Centre, £5,000 Sustainable Futures grant for REAP Counselling Services and £20,000 Heritage Lottery for Leeds Young Authors.
10. It should be noted that some clients' funding applications are pending results and others are still under application with results not known until later on in 2007/08. These applications total £55,000 and the Area Committee will be updated on progress.
11. The £55,000 is made up of an application from the Islamic Centre in Chapeltown who have received support to put together documentation and costs to support a funding application to the Sports Lottery for a capital project of £50,000 to upgrade and refurbish its sports hall on Cowper Street, so that it can be brought into community use. If this application is completed and successful it will greatly enhance the total amount of external funds brought into the area.
12. A further bid for £5,000 is being made by Phillip's Foods based in Chapeltown to the Prince's Trust to for a social business start up grant.

Publicity

13. The project has been marketed constantly since the project started. To launch the project posters and leaflets were produced and distributed at community buildings and shops across the area. The services have also been advertised in locally based newsletters such as Community Highlights and online through Communities online. In addition, the postholder has visited community buildings such as community centres and churches on a regular basis to provide updated leaflets and posters.
14. As the original focus of the post was to work with the social care voluntary groups, the postholder has also attended the Neighbourhood Network meetings to market his services. He has also attended the Meanwood Youth Practitioners meeting where voluntary organisations working with young people network.

Capacity Building Work

15. The demand amongst groups for business planning, governance and organisational capacity building work was perhaps underestimated in the original project brief. Many of the groups that have requested funding advice have not had suitable management or accountability arrangements in place, which are required before a bid can be submitted to many external funders. This has taken time and intensive individual work with organisations and it is only now that we are seeing the results of funding bids.
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17. In September 2006 a survey was conducted of all the groups that were receiving support. This was to establish the exact level of business planning and organisational management advice that was required, and also to find out if any funding applications had been submitted as a result of the assistance from the project. The results of this survey are in the table below. Of 56 surveys sent out, 20 responded.

Client Survey Response extract (September 2006)

RESPONSE	GROUPS
Want further support for advice and assistance with business planning	16
Have a fundraising strategy or business plan under development as a result of assistance	5
Are considering social enterprise plans	9
Have submitted a funding bid	6

18. On the basis of the survey, and to free up time to try and support groups with funding bids, new groups that required infrastructure support have been referred to other support organisations including Resourcing the Community and the social enterprise unit, Sustainable Futures.

Effectiveness of the post

Social care organisations

19. In the early months the social care organisations were targeted as per the project brief. He arranged meetings with the groups and discussed ways that they could move away from a grant dependent culture. At least one of the groups commissioned a feasibility study exploring how the organisation could move to a social enterprise set up rather than grant dependant nature. The study concluded that the organisation was not in a position to change primarily because of the strong resistance to the principle of charging for services as it was felt that this was in direct contract to their organisational voluntary ethos. This has proved to be the case with many of the social care organisations that were involved in the project. Against this background it has proved difficult to make significant inroads in terms of helping them to move away from a grant dependent culture.

External funders

20. In addition many of the large external funders increasingly do not support bids for funding that cover salaries or running costs. Much external funding is targeted at encouraging social enterprise activities or for specific, time limited projects that deliver a particular outcome. Again, given this situation it has proved difficult to find suitable funding sources for the social care organisations to bid into as the majority of their requirements relate to maintaining their existing organisational setup and service delivery.

Comparison with Inner North West Grant & Funding Advice Worker post

21. However, it is clear that where organisations have projects that meet the priorities of funding providers the post has had some success in attracting additional external funding to the area. The North West (Inner) Area Committee has funded a similar post for 3 years. An evaluation report to the North West (Inner) Area Committee in October 2004 noted that;
- 'Early on in the project a lack of community development and dedicated capacity building support within the area was noted. This has had an impact on project delivery as groups that wish to apply for funding need to:
- Allow a run in time of 6-12 months
 - Have a clear business/project plan
 - Have clearly identified the needs that their intended project aims to address
 - Set aside staff/volunteer time for fundraising activity
 - Be up to date with various policies and procedures
22. All of the above need significant time to develop and most of the projects worked with had not considered two or more of the above list. A lack of supplementary information required by funders has often caused the application process to be halted while additional support is provided to complete these tasks.
23. The Inner North West evaluation report covers the first 18 months of the post, in comparison to this report which covers 12 months. After 18 months the North West project had secured income of £120,000 external funds from bids supported by the officer. The North East project had secured £35,000 after 12 months.

Inner North West – links to Voluntary Action Leeds

24. The Inner North West Area Committee have continued to fund the post and in subsequent years it has proved very successful in bringing in additional external funding. In the first three quarters of 2006/07 the project had brought in just under £300,000. As many of the organisations the project worked with would have been through the community development and capacity building support work in the first year of the project, this later success can be attributed to this early groundwork. In addition the post is based with Voluntary Action Leeds (VAL) and the relationship with core staff at VAL has worked to mutual benefit. Groups who were not aware of VAL's services have benefited from referral to the Small Groups Development Worker, volunteer bureau, information/library services and training provision. Staff at VAL have also referred groups to the fundraising project.

Conclusion

25. It is clear that the North East post has assisted 70 voluntary organisations across the area to build capacity, develop business plans so that they can apply for external funding and in some cases secure additional external funding. However, against the original objective of the post, to secure sustainability for the social care organisations the project has not had great success. It is significant though that in order for this to happen, the organisations themselves need to be in a position to consider new ways of working and during the lifetime of this post that has not been the case. In addition the actual amount of external funding secured is less than the cost of the project over the same period.
26. In conclusion, the groups that have secured funding as a result of the project have all been based in priority areas which qualify for a range of grants and are also being targeted by other organisations who have recruited workers to advise on social enterprise. In addition support is available locally through Resourcing the Community and Voluntary Action Leeds.

27. The Area Management Team will continue to subscribe to the various funding updates and send these to the extensive contact database that has been compiled. On this basis, and taking account of the amount of external funding raised by the project, to continue to fund a post offering grant and funding advice may not offer best value for money for the Area Committee.

K Fund project

28. Members have received regular, detailed updates on the grants awarded under the K Fund scheme. These are summarised in appendix 2.
29. The K Fund was established to help people and organisations bring forward locally based projects that will support the development of social enterprises that contribute to the economic development and regeneration of the area. The Objective 2 funding that was awarded to the project meant the eligible area is very small – Chapeltown, Scott Hall, Miles Hill and Beckhill estates in Chapel Allerton ward.
30. The Area Committee will recall that Objective 2 funding requires match funding in order to be claimed. As part of the Well-Being Fund that was awarded in 2005, some of the funding was used to match fund the K Fund grants given to organisations . The remaining funding has been used to pay for the 2 day per week post that implements the project.
31. Government Office require as a condition of the Objective 2 funding that the project is completed as per the dates in the original application form. Therefore the project needs to continue running until the end of November 2007, with the final claim and audit carried out in December 2007. If it is not completed potentially they could ask for all the ERDF funding, including what we have spent, to be paid back. The Area Management Team therefore need to continue to run the K Fund project and have secured permission from Government Office to recruit an agency worker to fill this gap. Jake Kirkwood started in post on 22nd May and will be working on a Monday and Tuesday to complete the K Fund project work.
32. The final round of the K Fund took place in March 2007 and there is a balance of £2,546 remaining. An options report will be prepared and a meeting arranged with the K Fund panel to decide how best to allocate the remaining funding.

Recommendations

33. The Area Committee is requested to;
- a) note the contents of the report
 - b) consider the evaluation of the Grant and Funding Advice worker post and indicate if they support the recommendation not to continue funding for the 3 day a week post.