

To: City Executive Board

Date: 9 July 2015

Report of: The Scrutiny Committee

Title of Report: Grant Monitoring Information for 2014/15

Summary and Recommendations

Purpose of report: To present recommendations from the Scrutiny Committee on Grant Monitoring Information for 2014/15

Key decision? No

Scrutiny Lead Member: Councillor Simmons

Executive lead member: Councillor Rowley, Executive Member for Leisure, Parks and Sport

Policy Framework: Oxford City Council Corporate Plan primarily Strong & Active Communities

Recommendation of the Scrutiny Committee to the City Executive Board:

We recommend that the under-spend of £21,040 is rolled forwards and spent on grants to community and voluntary organisations in 2015/16.

Introduction

1. The Scrutiny Committee pre-scrutinised the Grant Monitoring Information for 2014/15 at its public meeting on 30 June 2015. The Committee would like to thank Councillor Mike Rowley, Ian Brooke and Julia Tomkins for presenting this report and answering questions.

Summary of the discussion

2. The Committee questioned why there was an under-spend on the small grants programme and the Social Inclusion Fund amounting to £21,040, and what happens to this money. The Committee heard that

this is absorbed into a corporate pot and noted that there had been unmet demand in other parts of the Council's Community and Voluntary Organisations (CVO's) grant programme.

Recommendation - We recommend that the under-spend of £21,040 is rolled forwards and spent on grants to community and voluntary organisations in 2015/16.

3. Members also commented on particular line items listed in the appendices and questioned whether attendees were confident that some of these were delivering best outcomes for the money. For example, members questioned the cost of around £5,000 per homeless person assisted and whether more could be helped with a different mix of service provision. On the other hand, Members noted that some grant spending delivered exceptionally good value - for example, money spent on benefits advice delivered approximately 8x the value in additional benefits. Members heard that the project descriptions should be viewed in their full context of providing wider community benefits and officers offered to provide more information on particular projects if required.

Executive response – to follow

Name and contact details of author:-

Andrew Brown on behalf of the Scrutiny Committee
Scrutiny Officer
Law and Governance
Tel: 01865 252230 e-mail: abrown2@oxford.gov.uk

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