

To: City Executive Board
Date: 19 September 2017
Report of: Head of Service for Community Services
Title of Report: Monitoring the Community Grants Programme – Report for 2016/17

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To inform members of the monitoring findings of the 2016/17 grants programme.
Key decision:	No
Executive Board Member:	Councillor Dee Sinclair, Culture and Communities
Corporate Priority:	Strong, Active Communities.
Policy Framework:	Corporate Plan and Community Centre Strategy
Recommendation: That the City Executive Board resolves to:	
1. Note the results of the grant monitoring and the positive impact the community and voluntary sector is making in the city.	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	List of community and voluntary organisations awarded a grant through the open bidding, commissioning and Youth Ambition grant programmes.
Appendix 2	Case Studies.
Appendix 3	Risk Register.
Appendix 4	Examples of monitoring returned for projects funded through the small grants and open bidding programmes

Introduction and background

- 1 Effective monitoring ensures that grant funding awarded is spent for the purpose it was given and helps the Council assess the impact of the funded work. It provides an opportunity to find out if there are any external factors affecting the voluntary sector and how organisations are weathering these circumstances.

- 2 Community Services ran the following programmes, shown in Table 1, in the last year. The three programmes to which eligible community and voluntary organisations could apply were:
- Community Grants Programme
 - Youth Ambition Grants Programme
 - Holiday Activities Grant Programme (monitoring feedback for this programme is reported separately)
- 3 Table 1 below shows the amount spent by each programme.

Table 1

	Amount spent
Grant programme	
Advice & Money Management	£518,359
Homelessness	£442,279
Inclusive Arts & Culture	£235,262
Community Safety	£61,082
Community & Voluntary Sector Infrastructure	£43,736
Inclusive Play & Leisure for Disabled Children & Young People	£15,000
Annual Open Bidding Grant Programme	£110,000
Small Grant Programme	£6,140
Youth Ambition Grant Programme	£60,000
*Overpayment of Rent – internal adjustment being made	£5,000
Total	£1,496,848

*For a number of years rent for Emmaus has been deducted from their grant, this is an internal transaction, they moved into alternative premises not owned by the Council but the transaction still took place.

Key Findings

- 4 It continues to be a challenging time for the city’s community and voluntary organisations and Oxford City Council funding is considered vital by the many it supports.
- 5 Our investment of £1,496,848 has helped local community and voluntary organisations secure an additional £7,963,060 to benefit local people, £5.33 for every £1 we have invested.
- 6 However this does show a decrease of 22% on the amount of reported secured income from last year. Arts and culture and youth programmes show the biggest decreases in income, this is because of an increase in competition when applying to other sources of funding.
- 7 Through monitoring we have discovered that well established organisations are increasingly seeking support with funding issues, advice on governing structures, how they can use their resources more effectively and how to maximise income.
- 8 With less funding available many organisations are finding themselves competing against each other and for smaller pots of funding. More positively, groups have

risen to the challenges and are now working more collaboratively sharing skills and in some cases jointly applying for funding.

Addressing Council Priorities

- 9 Whether as part of the commissioning programme or through open bidding, small grants or the youth ambition programme, funding to community and voluntary organisations supports the Council in meeting its corporate plan objectives and also helps improve the quality of life for many Oxford residents.

Social Impact

- 10 Areas where our funding is making a significant impact include:
- Our funding enables groups to develop and expand volunteer delivery for a wide range of key community services. This includes befriending isolated older people, teaching English to asylum seekers and refugees, children's activities in deprived areas and ensuring residents in regeneration areas access information and news in their locality as well as finding out about cultural and family events.
 - Making a real difference to local communities, improving the quality of people's lives and their life chances by funding advice centres to support people out of debt, look at ways to increase their income and support many to stay in their homes.
 - Funding organisations working with homeless people and rough sleepers to help them make life changing choices, improve their accommodation, learn new skills and get into employment.

Process of Gathering Monitoring Information

- 11 One of the conditions for funding is that organisations agree to provide qualitative and quantitative reporting on the grant they have received. In most instances this is received via a completed monitoring form. In other cases a site visit by officer(s) takes place, or a combination of both dependent on scale or perceived risk of grant.
- 12 The City Executive Board agreed for organisations that fail to return monitoring information that they will need to return any funding paid to them and they will not be eligible to apply for funding for one year. This is reiterated in award letters.
- 13 This has proved to be very successful and all organisations returned their monitoring during the year.

Monitoring Information

- 14 Appendices 1 and 2 provide the following information:
- Name of organisation / group
 - Amount of grant awarded
 - Description of project / activity
 - Number of beneficiaries
 - Brief description of what was achieved

- Total amount of matched funding or funding levered in as a result of Oxford City Council funding
- Case studies from a variety of organisations

15 Table 2 below summarises the information listed in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the 2016/17 open bidding grants programme.

Table 2 – Annual Open Bidding Summary – Grants Up To £10,000

Number of projects awarded a grant	Total amount of grant awarded	Total of other funding matched or levered in	Number of beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
21	£110,000	£384,766	19,577 plus 20,000 households receive community newspapers	Training, community events, work with asylum seekers and refugees, work targeting people suffering from loneliness/isolation

For each £1 invested in the annual open bidding grants programme, the equivalent of £3.49 in additional funding was matched or levered into Oxford.

16 Table 3 below summarises the information in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the small grants programme during 2016/17

Table 3 – Open Bidding – Small Grants Up To £1,000

Number of projects awarded a grant	Total amount of grant awarded	Total of other funding matched or levered in	Number of beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
9	£6,130	£10,707	6,293	Community events, dance for children and young people, puppet performance at the Story Museum

For each £1 invested in the annual open bidding grants programme, the equivalent of £1.74, in additional funding was matched or levered into Oxford.

17 Table 4 below summarises the information listed in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the 2016/17 Youth Ambition grants programme.

Table 4 – Open bidding – Summary from Youth Ambition Grants Programme Grants Up To £10,000

Number of projects awarded a grant	Total amount of grant awarded	Total of other funding matched or levered in	Number of beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
11	£60,000	£47,946	223	FGM, 1:1 support, raising awareness about staying safe, youth volunteering

For each £1 invested in the youth ambition grants programme, the equivalent of £0.79, in additional funding was matched or levered into Oxford.

18 Tables 5 & 6 below summarise the information listed in Appendix 1 for grants awarded through the 2016/17 commissioning programme.

Table 5 – Commissioned Grants Summary

Commissioned theme	Number of groups funded	Total amount of grant awarded	Total of other funding matched or levered in	Number of beneficiaries from these projects	Some of the things the funding paid for
Arts & culture	12	£235,262	£771,204	44,950	Training in film & digital media, twinning events, work experience in the theatre
For every £1 invested in the arts and culture commissioning theme the equivalent of £3.27 in additional funding was matched or levered into Oxford.					
Homelessness	12	£442,279	£5,316,869	1156	Day centres, life skills, specialist workers

For every £1 invested in the homelessness commissioning theme the equivalent of £12.02 in additional funding was matched or levered into Oxford.					
Community safety	4	£61,082	£231,135	451	Domestic violence outreach, helpline service for victims of sexual violence
For every £1 invested in the community safety commissioning theme the equivalent of £3.78 in additional funding was matched or levered into Oxford.					
Community & voluntary organisations infrastructure	1	£43,736	£258,302	996 Oxford based community & voluntary groups	Providing information, support and advice to the voluntary sector
For every £1 invested in the community & voluntary organisations infrastructure commissioning theme the equivalent of £5.90 in additional funding was matched or levered in.					
Play & leisure for disabled children and young people	1	£15,000	£194,971	212	Supporting disabled children and young people to participate in inclusive mainstream play
For every £1 invested in the play & leisure for disabled children and young people commissioning theme the equivalent of £12.99 in additional funding was matched or levered into Oxford for this work.					
Totals	30	£797,359	£6,772,481	72,862 plus	996 voluntary groups

Table 6 – summary from commissioned advice centres

Number of organisations funded	Total amount of grant awarded	Number of beneficiaries from these projects	Total of other funding matched or levered in	Total benefit (in monetary value) take up	Total amount of debt written off
4	£518,379	9502	£747,160	£4,835,087	£792,636

Financial implications

- 19 The report demonstrates the value of the Council's grant programmes.
- 20 For clarification the amount of funding matched or levered in is collected through monitoring reports returned by all funded organisations and groups. The information they give us is taken on trust but if necessary financial information can be clarified when accounts have been independently assessed or audited. Some examples of monitoring information returned is attached in Appendix 4.

Legal issues

- 21 There are no legal implications.

Level of risk

- 22 Please see Appendix 3 for risk.

Equalities impact

- 23 Grant funding awarded to community and voluntary organisations has a significant and positive impact on equalities and promotes community cohesion. Grants actively supported the achievements of equality by otherwise marginalised groups, such as funding supplied to Oxford Friend, to Oxford Sexual Abuse and Rape Crisis Centre for the domestic violent case worker and to the Parasol Project that provides inclusive play and leisure activities for disabled children and young people. In addition 59% of the council's funding benefitted people in localities facing multiple deprivation or inequalities.

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