

**To:** Cabinet  
**Date:** 11 September 2019  
**Report of:** Head of Community Services  
**Title of Report:** Monitoring the Community Grants Programme – Report for 2018/19

| <b>Summary and recommendations</b>  |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Purpose of report:</b>   | To inform Cabinet of the findings from the monitoring of the 2018/19 grants programme. |
| <b>Key decision:</b>  | No   |
| <b>Executive Board Member:</b>  | Councillor Marie Tidball, Supporting Local Communities                                 |
| <b>Corporate Priority:</b>  | Strong, Active Communities.  |
| <b>Policy Framework:</b>  | None.  |
| <b>Recommendation:</b> That Cabinet resolves to:  |  |
| 1. <b>Note</b> the results of the grant monitoring and the positive impact the community and voluntary sector is making in the city |  |

| <b>Appendices</b> |  |
|-------------------|--|
| Appendix 1        | List of community and voluntary organisations awarded a grant through the open bidding, commissioning, small grants and youth ambition programmes. |
| Appendix 2        | Case Studies   |
| Appendix 3        | Review of The Good Exchange  |
| Appendix 4        | Risk Register  |

## **Introduction**

- 1 The purpose of this report is to summarise the Council's grants that were awarded during 2018/19 and highlight the impact that these grants have had on Oxford's communities.
- 2 The Council awards grants to support people with the greatest needs and to help to build capacity and strengthen communities by funding charitable and voluntary groups
- 3 Community Services ran three grant programmes last year to which eligible community and voluntary organisations could apply, they were:
  - a. Community grants programme that includes the Annual Open Bidding Grants Programme, Small Grants Programme and the Commissioning Grants Programme
  - b. Youth Ambition Grants Programme – one off grants that can be applied for on an annual basis
  - c. Holiday Activities Grant Programme – also one off grants that can be applied for on an annual basis (NB monitoring feedback for this programme is reported separately)
- 4 Commissioning themes have been identified by the council as making a substantial contribution to the achievement of our corporate priorities. Grants were awarded under the following themes:-
  - a. Arts and Culture
  - b. Community Safety
  - c. Advice Centres
  - d. Homelessness
  - e. Community and Voluntary Organisations (CVOs) Infrastructure
  - f. Specialist Play

## **Council Priorities**

- 5 Oxford City Council's Corporate Plan 2016 – 2020 highlights that communities should be strong, active, socially cohesive and safe. The grants to CVOs help the Council in meeting its corporate plan objectives and help improve the quality of life for Oxford's residents.

## **Key observations**

- 6 Our investment of £1,515,042 has supported local CVOs to secure an additional £4,264,575 of funding to benefit local people. This equates to £2.81 from other external sources for every £1 we invested. Other funders are more likely to contribute to a group if they see they have the support from their Local Authority.

- 7 Some CVOs are facing financial constraints and looking at different ways to manage their resources more effectively, some are using their reserves to make up any short-falls.
- 8 The number of refugees and asylum seekers seeking support from organisations we fund is increasing. Other key challenges being faced are access to benefits and homelessness.

### **Social Impact**

- 9 Areas where our funding is making a significant impact include:
  - a. **CVOs:** CVOs continue to deliver activities at the heart of their communities by using and supporting volunteers to deliver a wide range of key community services. Examples of the work being undertaken include:
    - a. befriending isolated older people
    - b. children's activities in deprived localities
    - c. teaching English to asylum seekers and refugees
    - d. supporting homeless people and rough sleepers with reintegration
    - e. young people learning new skills and gaining confidence through volunteering
  - b. **Accessing Information:** By funding local newspapers residents are finding out about available cultural and family events and services in their local area.
  - c. **Advice Centres:** Centres funded through the commissioning programme across the city provide information, advice and guidance to local residents.

### **Equalities Impact**

- 10 Grant funding awarded to CVOs had a significant and positive impact in addressing inequalities. Some of the inequalities addressed have included:-
  - a. Supporting people affected by loneliness
  - b. Supporting and providing activities for disabled people
  - c. Helping people affected by financial exclusion by providing free welfare benefit and debt advice
- 11 We will review our grant programme to ensure we provide funding to all nine protected characteristics in an equitable fashion. This will be based on the results of an Equality Impact Assessment we are planning to conduct, enabling us to identify any gaps and address them accordingly.

### **Grant Reporting Mechanism and Monitoring**

- 12 CVOs receiving funds formally agree to submit a report providing qualitative and quantitative information summarising activities and impacts.
- 13 All information received is collated onto the grant monitoring system for analysis, to support learning and to measure impact. Please see appendices 1 and 2.
- 14 Appendix 1: This appendix contains most of the quantitative information in one spreadsheet comprising 10 separate worksheets and is summarised below:

| No | Worksheet Name                | Comment / detail   |
|----|-------------------------------|--|
| 1  | Summary - Open Bidding        | Headlines of open bidding grants up to £10,000 and Youth Ambition up to £7,000   |
| 2  | Summary - Commissioning       | Per Theme - Summary of Grants awarded through the Commissioning Programmes in 2018/19                                    |
| 3  | Annual Open Bidding           | Grants to Community and Voluntary Organisations – 23 CVOs  |
| 4  | Open Bidding - Small Grants   | Small grant programme 2018/19 – 16 CVOs  |
| 5  | Open Bidding - Youth Ambition | Youth Ambition Grants Programme 2018/19 – 10 CVOs  |
| 6  | Arts And Culture              | Commissioned Art Organisations in 2018/19 through the Inclusive Arts and Culture commissioning grant programme - 12 CVOs |
| 7  | Community Safety              | Commissioned Organisations in 2018/19 through the Community Safety commissioning grant programme – 4 CVOs                |
| 8  | Advice                        | Advice Centres 2018/19 and data – 4 CVOs   |
| 9  | Homelessness                  | Commissioned Organisations in 2018/19 through the Homelessness commissioning grant programme – 14 CVOs                   |
| 10 | CVO Infrastructure            | Commissioning CVO Infrastructure 2018/19 – 1 CVO<br>(Oxfordshire Community & Voluntary Action (OCVA))                    |
| 11 | Specialist Play               | Commissioning Specialist Play 2018/19 – 1 CVO<br>Parasol Project   |

15 Appendix 2: Comprises of six case studies from different organisations and gives real examples of the impact on local residents' lives. The narrative in the case studies is verbatim in the words of the writer – as they were received.

16 Appendix 3 is a review of The Good Exchange which is a fundraising platform where we piloted a small grants programme last year.

### **The Oxford Lottery**

17 Oxford City Council has launched an online lottery to help raise funds for local voluntary and community groups in Oxford.

18 The Lottery launched in March this year and is a weekly online lottery which allows players to enter for a chance to win a jackpot of up to £25,000, whilst nominating their favourite local charities or community groups as beneficiaries.

19 Since its launch 47 charities and community groups have registered as 'good causes', there are 225 players and 448 tickets sold. Tickets cost £1, broken down as follows: 50p goes to the charity of the player's choice, 10p goes towards the

Oxford City Lottery Community Fund, 20p goes towards the administration of the website and 20p for VAT.

**Financial implications**

20 The report demonstrates the value of the Council’s grant programmes.

**Legal issues**

21 There are no legal implications.

**Level of risk**

22 Please see Appendix 4 for risk.

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| <b>Report author</b>       | Carolyn Newall   |
| Job title                  | Diversity and Inclusion Manager                                  |
| Service area or department | Community Services   |
| Telephone                  | 01865 252156   |
| e-mail                     | <a href="mailto:cnewall@oxford.gov.uk">cnewall@oxford.gov.uk</a> |

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