

SEVENOAKS DISTRICT COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME - 2020/2021

People & Places Advisory Committee - 1 December 2020

Report of: Deputy Chief Executive, Chief Officer People & Places

Status: Information only

Also considered by: N/A

Key Decision: No

Executive Summary: This report summarises the impact of Covid-19 on the projects/work supported by the Community Grants awarded for the year 2020/2021.

This report supports the Key Aim of: Council's Corporate Plan

Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Lesley Dyball

Contact Officer: Jenny Godfrey, Ext. 7112

Recommendation to People & Places Advisory Committee:

To note the impact of Covid-19 on the projects/work supported by the Community Grants awarded for year 2020/2021 and understand the work being undertaken to mitigate, adapt and adjust such that residents continue to benefit.

Reason for recommendation: To keep Members updated on the 2020/21 Community Grants and note any ongoing matters arising from Covid-19 and how these are being progressed and monitored by SDC.

Introduction and Background

2020/21 Community Grants - impact of Covid-19

- 1 All recipients of Community Grants for 2020/21 have been offered SDC guidance and support since the grants were awarded. During August and September, they were asked to provide an update on the impact of Covid-19 on the work/project they intended to deliver together with any changes made/planned.

Results

2 The majority of Community Grant recipients (21 of 22) have been able to deliver or adapt to deliver some or all of the intended benefits to Sevenoaks District residents. Examples of this include:

- BRIDGES in Edenbridge were funded to run creative arts and crafts sessions in their café. Due to the social distancing restrictions, they reverted to delivering packs of materials and then running virtual sessions to complete the projects together.
- West Kent Mediation have seen a huge increase in cases and have adjusted to holding virtual mediation sessions.
- PSB Breastfeeding have adapted their provision of supporting new mothers by training volunteers via video calls.
- Sevenoaks Counselling has reverted to using Zoom in some of its counselling sessions.
- Age UK Sevenoaks & Tonbridge were funded to run the Pop Up Café sessions. Given it was not possible to run such sessions, Age UK provided telephone support to the residents instead. To date, over 800 calls have been made. The Pop Up team also carried out doorstep welfare visits, and distributed many goods that Age UK Sevenoaks & Tonbridge had purchased and some that had been donated via Age UK National Office.
- Fegans were funded to deliver Parents Supporting Parents programme and have adapted the delivery using online sessions instead of face-to-face meetings.
- DAVSS doubled their telephone helpline hours and reverted to virtual sessions instead of face-to-face meetings. DAVSS have already exceeded the performance indicators set in their application for the Community Grant.
- North West Kent Volunteer Centre were planning to deliver befriending sessions as well as telephone befriending in the Swanley area. As a result of Covid-19 they have switched entirely to telephone befriending. An example is the Horton Kirby/South Darenth group where members were given access to North West Kent Volunteer Centre staff members for a weekly befriending chat. In addition, it was arranged that those members that had made friends and wanted to

stay in touch could choose to swap numbers. This has meant that group members have been able to support each other during these challenging times.

- Of the £54,800 awarded it is currently confirmed that £750 will be returned to SDC as Salus were unable to hold their primary to secondary school transition event. Salus was awarded a total of £1,500 but were only able to provide transition books to year 6 students in the district spending just 50% of the funding.
- There is the potential that a further two organisations will need to return all or part of their funding. These are:
- West Kent Extra (the one organisation not yet able to deliver any of its intended project) was granted funding to deliver a summer residential trip project for vulnerable children aged 8-12 years living in the Sevenoaks District. It was not possible for this residential trip to go ahead in the summer and it has been postponed to February 2021. It is not clear if this trip will still proceed so West Kent Extra has been asked to provide confirmation either way by 31 December 2020. If it does not proceed, the funding of £3,550 will be returned to SDC.
- Kenward Trust received a grant of £4,400 to deliver two Active Archery and Alpaca Sessions per month to groups of vulnerable adults and young people in the Sevenoaks District to help reduce loneliness, social isolation, get people active and increase participation in outdoor activities. Since July, Kenward Trust have been undertaking the project but the numbers of vulnerable adults have been limited due to Covid-19 restrictions. Kenward Trust has been asked to provide an update on progress by 31 December 2020. Given the second national lockdown, it is possible that a proportion of this £4,400 grant will be returned to SDC.
- Sevenoaks District Arts Council have reported the cancellation of many events due to be supported. However, they were able to support a photography exhibition recently. Sevenoaks District Arts Council has been asked to provide a further update on the spending of their £2,500 grant by 31 December 2020.

Key Matters Arising

- 3 Some funding is being returned to SDC. To date it is confirmed that this amounts to £750. Further updates will be obtained from three other organisations by 31 December 2020 to ascertain if further funding is to be returned.

- 4 The review of the 2020/21 Community Grants in this way has provided an opportunity to discover, record, share and develop new ways of working within volunteer led organisations to support some of the most vulnerable Sevenoaks District residents. The impact of Covid-19 on communities has resulted in these volunteer led organisations responding with alternative service delivery models. These new experiences are already being shared including via the Voluntary Sector Forum. SDC has now also included a requirement for organisations to feedback with case studies highlighting any new ways of working when they provide their Community Grant annual monitoring return in April 2021. The learning obtained from these organisations will be shared to help inform and assist future community projects.

Key Implications

Financial

The grant scheme is funded by SDC Core Budgets. A sum of £750 is to be returned to SDC. There is potential for further monies to be returned and further details on this will be made available to the Finance Team for early 2021.

Legal Implications and Risk Assessment Statement.

There are no legal implications and risk assessments are carried out on by the community and voluntary groups receiving grants on a project/works/event basis.

Equality Assessment

Members are reminded of the requirement, under the Public Sector Equality Duty (section 149 of the Equality Act 2010) to have due regard to (i) eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act 2010, (ii) advance equality of opportunity between people from different groups, and (iii) foster good relations between people from different groups. The decisions recommended through this report directly impact on end users. The impact has been analysed and does not vary between groups of people. The results of this analysis are set out immediately below.

Consideration of impacts under the Public Sector Equality Duty:

Question	Answer	Explanation / Evidence
a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to disadvantage or discriminate against	No	The Grant scheme is inclusive of all charities

	different groups in the community?		
b.	Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have the potential to promote equality of opportunity?	Yes	The grant scheme is open to everyone running a community charity/scheme
c.	What steps can be taken to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?	N/A	No negative impacts identified

Conclusions

This paper highlights the impact of Covid-19 on the 2020/2021 Community Grants and identifies how any issues are being progressed and monitored by SDC.

<p>Appendices</p> <p>None</p> <p>Background Papers</p> <p>None</p>
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Sarah Robson

Deputy Chief Executive and Chief Officer - People & Places