

	<h2>Adults & Safeguarding Committee</h2> <h3>19 March 2015</h3>
Title	<h3>Community Focus – Extension of Funding Agreement, 2015/16</h3>
Report of	Deputy Director of Finance & Deputy Chief Operating Officer
Wards	All
Status	Public
Enclosures	None
Officer Contact Details	Ken Argent, Grants Manager, Finance, Commissioning Group (ken.argent@barnet.gov.uk) (020 8359 2020) Stephen Evans, Director of Strategy (stephen.evans@barnet.gov.uk) (020 8359 3021)

<h2>Summary</h2>
<p>This report seeks approval to extend funding of Community Focus (CF) through an existing funding agreement to 31 March 2016.</p>

<h2>Recommendations</h2>
<p>(1) That, subject to the council’s Standard Conditions of Grant Aid, the existing funding agreement with Community Focus, subsidising places on its courses for older and disabled people to improve their resilience and capacity to live independently, be extended for a further twelve months beyond 2014/15 to 31 March 2016.</p> <p>(2) That a grant of £51,300 to Community Focus be approved for 2015/16.</p> <p>(3) That the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance be authorised to finalise terms and conditions in relation to the grant.</p>

1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED

- 1.1 The existing funding agreement with CF expires on 31 March 2015.
- 1.2 The power to award grants of more than £5,000 to voluntary and community groups is contained in the terms of reference of theme committees in the council's constitution - annexe A of Responsibilities for Functions.

2. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 These are set out in section 5 below.

3. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND NOT RECOMMENDED

- 3.1 None.

4. POST DECISION IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The terms and conditions of the grant to CF in 2015/16 will be determined in consultation with the organisation, for approval by the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance.
- 4.2 The grant will be released termly in advance, linked to the achievement of targets and outcomes in 2015/16.

5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION

5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance

- 5.1.1 The Corporate Plan for 2013-16 includes the following strategic objectives:
 - Creation of the right environment to promote responsible growth, development and success across the borough
 - Supporting families and individuals that need it – promoting independence, learning and well-being
 - Improving the satisfaction of residents and businesses with the London Borough of Barnet as a place to live, work and study
- 5.1.2 The Older Adults Strategy, 'Living Longer, Living Better', and the Older People's Commissioning Strategy, 2008-17, 'Independence, Choice and Control', focus on developing preventative services; tackling inequalities; and the wider well-being agenda. Barnet's Health and Well-Being Strategy and Integrated Care Model seek to promote the health and well-being of older and disabled people, helping them to achieve key outcomes, including the best possible quality of life, and to remain part of the community.
- 5.1.3 The commissioning strategy espouses the development of more day care choices for individuals and carers. The provision of educational and creative activities, such as by CF, supports this objective whilst promoting social integration; community cohesion; and pride in the borough.

5.1.4 CF, a registered charity formed in 1978, is a unique and specialised resource in Barnet aimed at encouraging disabled and older people to participate in the arts in pursuit of personal development; social interaction; equality; and lifelong learning. It offers courses and workshops to a range of disadvantaged people whose participation in the arts is limited and who lack stimulation and are at risk of social exclusion.

Funding Agreement, 2011/15

5.1.5 In 2011, in line with the phasing out of core funding of voluntary and community groups, an annual revenue grant awarded to CF towards running costs was replaced by commissioning an outcome-based programme of art work targeted at specific groups of people. A three-year agreement, extending to 31 March 2014, was negotiated with CF based on subsidising the fees payable for attendance on its courses by:

- older people (over 55s)
- people with disabilities including sensory impairment
- people with mental health problems including dementia
- people with learning disabilities

5.1.6 The agreement was extended in 2013 to the end of 2014/15.

5.1.7 The primary aim of the agreement is to help clients build individual resilience and continue to live independently as far as possible through involvement in arts-based activities. It focuses resources on the key client groups compared to only about two thirds of the funds previously invested in the organisation through the annual core grant. The funding formula pays £126.21 towards each subsidised place, leaving CF with a similar sum or more to defray from fundraising to cover the full cost.

5.1.8 The agreement requires CF to provide a personalised service to disabled people and people with special needs, with staff and volunteers facilitating severely disabled users. This means that courses cater for small numbers of people – in most cases a maximum of fifteen at a time – and that CF maintains a staff-client ratio of at least one tutor and one to two volunteers to ten to twelve service users in each activity, depending on the needs of the client group.

5.1.9 The agreement is also geared towards the development and delivery of courses on an outreach basis in the community to improve access to residents living in all parts of the borough, especially more deprived wards in the west of the borough. Two-thirds of the annual subsidy is linked to attendance at courses away from CF's base, now at Friary House, primarily in Burnt Oak, Childs Hill, Colindale, Golders Green, Hale, Hendon and West Hendon Wards.

5.1.10 The main outcomes measured are that people feel more able to deal with challenging life circumstances; feel able to access appropriate support mechanisms where needed; are less likely to access statutory services; are

ready to work or volunteer in mainstream settings; and / or feel that their participation on courses has helped them to attain their own personal goals or develop skills to do so.

Performance

- 5.1.11 In 2011/12 (year 1), the outreach-related target for the year was modified by removal of the discrimination between outreach places in the selected west of borough wards and those in other parts of the borough because of the length of time involved in creating new outreach locations. With the benefit of that goodwill gesture, CF was able to claim the full subsidy of £83,300 for the year on the basis that 456 out of 660 clients eligible for subsidy attended courses delivered through the emerging outreach programme.
- 5.1.12 In 2012/13 (year 2), CF adhered to the division of subsidy in delivering outreach courses, but the attendance threshold for claiming such was relaxed because of a problem of maintaining participation throughout a ten-week or a twelve-week course by clients with senile dementia, who constituted a high proportion of clients at a number of new outreach locations. Of 597 clients eligible for subsidy, 397 attended courses in the community, enabling CF to claim the full subsidy for the year of £75,300.
- 5.1.13 In 2013/14 (year 3), the total number of clients eligible for subsidy exceeded the overall target figure of 533, but the number of eligible clients that attended outreach classes outside of the designated west of borough wards fell short by 13 of the target number of 134. Payment of the full subsidy for the year of £67,300 was on the basis that CF would make up the deficiency in 2014/15.
- 5.1.14 In 2014/15 (year 4), the agreement prescribes that the council will subsidise the fees of up to 188 clients at courses in the west of borough wards; up to a further 118 at courses anywhere else in the borough, except CF's premises; and up to a further 164 at any location. CF's data returns for terms 1 and 2 (April to December) indicate that it is on target to claim this year's full subsidy of £59,300, whilst also making good the previous shortfall.
- 5.1.15 Courses this year (both in-house and in the community) include creative writing; drama; dance; drumming; singing; watercolour painting; ceramics; jewellery making; textiles and print making; photography; visual arts; and computing.
- 5.1.16 Client satisfaction surveys and tutor evaluation of courses are analysed on a termly basis in the interests of quality assurance. Feedback demonstrates a high level of satisfaction with service delivery. A dialogue with managers of residential care homes and other outreach settings highlights how CF's work with some of the most severely disabled clients, in particular those with learning difficulties or suffering from dementia, is positively affecting their quality of life.

Extension of Agreement

5.1.17 The funding agreement with CF has re-modelled the council's financial relationship with the organisation in line with the Third Sector Commissioning Framework, which seeks to harness third sector capacity and strengths in support of corporate priorities; maximise value from funding arrangements with the sector; and bring consistency across the council in how it engages with voluntary and community organisations.

5.1.18 The agreement has brought about greater clarity of what the council's funding achieves, focusing, as it does, on older and disabled people with the greatest needs. It has resulted in diversification and expansion of the service across the borough through development of an outreach programme, which has enabled CF to engage with a larger number of clients with significant disabilities who are unable to access the in-house courses.

5.1.19 It is recommended that the agreement be rolled forward for a further twelve months beyond 31 March 2015 to the end of 2015/16, subject to the imposition of a further grant reduction of £8,000. The committee's consent is also sought to delegating authority to the Chief Operating Officer and Director of Finance to finalise terms and conditions of the grant.

5.1.20 The extension will facilitate a further review of CF's work in the context of future procurement options for supporting and maintaining the independence of older and disabled people, to be carried out in 2015.

5.2 Resources (Finance & Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT, Property, Sustainability)

5.2.1 The council's funding of CF, drawn from earmarked provision for the organisation in the corporate grants budget, has declined year on year since adoption of the new subsidy-orientated model as follows:

2010/11 *	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2013/14	4-year change
£87,300	£83,300	£75,300	£67,300	£59,300	-32.1%

* final year of annual core grant

The tapered reduction has reflected the constraints on public expenditure and the pursuit of more clearly defined outcomes and value for money through the conversion of grants into funding commissioning.

5.2.2 A grant of £51,300 is recommended for 2015/16, representing a reduction of £8,000 on the current year's award in line with the progressive reduction of funding under the existing agreement.

5.3 Legal and Constitutional References

5.3.1 The council has power to make grants awards under section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.

5.4 Risk Management

- 5.4.1 All grants to voluntary and community organisations are made subject to the council's Standard Conditions of Grant Aid. Amongst other things, the conditions cover how awards are spent, allowing council officers a right of access to proof thereof, and requiring notification of any change in an organisation's circumstances which significantly affect its grant entitlement. The council reserves the right to withhold payment of any approved grant, or to demand full or partial repayment, if it appears that an organisation has failed to comply with any of the conditions attached to the award.
- 5.4.2 The council has a longstanding funding relationship with CF. The new model based on subsidy per person has successfully replaced an annual core grant. Although grant payments cannot be enforced in law in the same way as a contract, any risk is mitigated in this case as the subsidy is paid only on the basis of individual attendances recorded.

5.5 Equalities and Diversity

- 5.5.1 Under section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, the council and all other organisations exercising public functions must have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by or under the Act and to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between people with protected characteristics and those without. The broad purpose of this duty is to integrate considerations of equality into daily business and keep them under review in decision making; the design of policies; and the delivery of services.
- 5.5.2 The protected characteristics are age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; religion or belief; sex; and sexual orientation. They also cover marriage and civil partnership with regard to eliminating discrimination. CF's services are aimed at some of these groups: older people; people with disabilities; people with mental health problems; and people with learning disabilities.
- 5.5.3 Any organisation providing public sector services is subject to scrutiny by the council to ensure that the delivery of services complies with the public sector equality duty. The funding agreement with CF involves regular client monitoring in relation to the protected characteristics, a procedure that is scrutinised on a termly basis as a key output measure linked to borough demographics.

5.6 Consultation and Engagement

- 5.6.1 Adults & Communities will lead on the review of CF's work in terms of the future procurement options for supporting and maintaining the independence of older and disabled people.

6 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 Funding agreement with CF, 2011/15.
- 6.2 Analysis of data collected on a termly basis over the period.