

	<b>Community Leadership Committee</b> <b>9 March 2016</b>
<b>Title</b>	<b>Community Focus – Extension of Funding Agreement, 2016/17</b>
<b>Report of</b>	Director of Resources
<b>Wards</b>	All
<b>Status</b>	Public
<b>Urgent</b>	No
<b>Key</b>	No
<b>Enclosures</b>	None
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## Summary

This report seeks approval to extend funding of Community Focus (CF) through an existing funding agreement to 31 March 2017.

## Recommendations

- (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 2015/16 to 31 March 2017.
- (2) That a grant of £47,300 to Community Focus be approved for 2016/17.
- (3) That the Director of Resources be authorised to finalise terms and conditions in relation to the grant.

## **1. WHY THIS REPORT IS NEEDED**

- 1.1 The existing funding agreement with CF expires on 31 March 2016.
- 1.2 The power to award grants of more than £5,000 to voluntary and community groups is vested in this committee in accordance with 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 2016/17 will be determined in consultation with the organisation, for approval by the Director of Resources.
- 4.2 The grant will be released termly in advance, linked to the achievement of targets and outcomes in 2016/17.

## **5. IMPLICATIONS OF DECISION**

### **5.1 Corporate Priorities and Performance**

- 5.1.1 The Corporate Plan, 2015-2020, identifies a set of strategic objectives which frame the council's approach to achieving its vision of making local services more integrated, intuitive and efficient by 2020, aimed at ensuring that Barnet is a place:

- of opportunity, where people can further their quality of life
- where people are helped to help themselves, recognising that prevention is better than cure
- where responsibility is shared, fairly
- where services are delivered efficiently to get value for money for the taxpayer

- 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, 2011/16**

- 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 has since been extended by a further two years to the end of 2015/16.

- 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 has also been 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 CF has achieved the targets set for each year and thereby claimed each year's full subsidy, albeit with the help of some initial goodwill gestures that firstly recognised the challenges in year 1 (2011/12) of creating new outreach locations from scratch and secondly relaxed the attendance threshold in year 2 (2012/13) because of a problem of maintaining participation throughout a ten-week or a twelve-week course by clients with senile dementia, who constitute a high proportion of clients at a number of outreach locations.

- 5.1.12 The number of clients in respect of whom CF has claimed the subsidy over the first four years of the agreement is as follows:

2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Grant – £83,300	Grant - £75,300	Grant - £67,300	Grant - £59,300
660 (including 456 through outreach programme)	597 (including 397 through outreach programme)	533 (including 347 through outreach programme)	470 (including 307 through outreach programme)

- 5.1.13 In 2015/16 (year 5), the agreement prescribes that the council will subsidise the fees of up to 162 clients at courses in the identified west of borough wards; up to a further 102 at courses anywhere else in the borough, except CF's premises; and up to a further 142 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 £51,300.

- 5.1.14 Courses this year (both in-house and in the community) include creative writing; drama; dance; drumming; singing; watercolour painting; ceramics; jewellery making; textile art; print and felt making; photography; visual arts; and computing.

- 5.1.15 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

5.1.16 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.

5.1.17 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.

5.1.18 It is recommended that the agreement be rolled forward for a further twelve months beyond 31 March 2016 to the end of 2016/17, subject to the imposition of a grant reduction of £4,000, modifying the year-on-year reduction of funding in recognition of the impact on CF's finances of having relocated to new premises. The committee's consent is also sought to delegate authority to the Director of Resources to finalise terms and conditions of the grant.

5.1.19 The extension will facilitate a 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 2016.

## 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	2014/15	2015/16	5-year change
£87,300	£83,300	£75,300	£67,300	£59,300	£51,300	-41.2%

\* 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 £47,300 is recommended for 2016/17, representing a reduction of £4,000 on the current year's award.

### **5.3 Social Value**

5.3.1 Not relevant in the context of this report.

### **5.4 Legal and Constitutional References**

5.4.1 The council has power to extend the arts preventative funding agreement with CF under section 1(1) of the Localism Act 2011, which grants the general competence. This gives local authorities the power to do anything an individual can do subject to public law principles, unless prohibited by law.

5.4.2 Constitution, Responsibility for Functions (annex A), sets out the terms of reference of the Community Leadership Committee, including being responsible for

- Grants to the voluntary sector
- To maintain good relations with Barnet's diverse communities ensuring that all communities have the opportunity to participate in the borough's affairs

### **5.5 Risk Management**

5.5.1 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.

5.5.2 The council has a longstanding funding relationship with CF. The existing 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.

### **5.6 Equalities and Diversity**

5.6.1 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.

5.6.2 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.

## **5.7 Consultation and Engagement**

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

## **5.8 Insight**

5.8.1 Not relevant.

## **6 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

6.1 Funding agreement with CF, 2011/16.

6.2 Analysis of data collected on a termly basis over the period.