

#### **S40. FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND (FPP): MARGINALISED GROUPS**

The committee considered a report by the Director of Corporate and Neighbourhood Services which provided an update on the work of external organisations in receipt of funding which provided services with a focus on marginalised groups, and which fall within the FPP reporting and monitoring arrangements.

The report provided information on the funding agreements Corporate and Neighbourhood Services had with external organisations during the period 1 April 2013 – 31 March 2014. An individual report was appended for each of the 5 organisations which received funding. Each report set out the service provided, the agreed outcomes/objectives and performance information.

The committee heard from officers in relation to the individual reports.

##### **(a) The Action Group – Real Jobs Falkirk**

Linda Scott provided an overview of the report, advising that the organisation received £90,000 of Council funding. 60 young people were engaged with the organisation. The organisation faced challenges in securing sustainable employment for service users.

The committee asked how the work of the project aligned with that of the employment training unit (ETU). Linda Scott stated that the ETU did not currently target disability. The ETU did not have as much capacity to deliver support to young people with a range of disabilities in the way that the project did. The Action Group works alongside school support workers to assist the transition for young people leaving Carrongrange school.

The committee asked how funding provided by the Council was spent. Linda Scott stated that the funding was used to secure employment support workers who were dedicated to the project.

Members asked if upon completion of placements service users were being retained in employment. Linda Scott stated that the project had secured successful outcomes for young people in smaller organisations, where relationships and trust were built up. She stated that the ETU was better placed to work with larger organisations and national chains.

The committee discussed the future challenges and risks facing the organisation and highlighted that Big Lottery Funding had expired in August 2014.

#### **Decision**

**The committee requested that a further report on The Action Group - Real Jobs Falkirk is submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.**

##### **(b) LinkLiving – Smartliving**

Elizabeth Hood provided an overview of the report, advising that the organisation received £14,114 of Council funding. The project utilised peer education to engage high school pupils to prevent homelessness. Scottish Government 'People and Communities' funding was due to expire in March 2015.

The committee asked if the project represented best value or if alternative methods of service delivery were available. Elizabeth Hood stated that peer educators provided a powerful message to young people in raising awareness of homelessness and the support services available. The project had also developed online information resources.

Members acknowledged the work done by the project and requested that officers arrange for the committee to visit the project.

The committee asked how the project used its funding. The project used funding for a variety of purposes including purchase of materials, booklets and publicity.

Members discussed the Council's statutory requirement to provide accommodation to people in crisis. Elizabeth Hood stated that whilst there is a statutory requirement to provide accommodation the project ensured that young people had the skill set to support themselves and avoid becoming homeless at all.

The committee asked about future funding of the project. Elizabeth Hood advised that the project had applied widely for funding achieving some success.

### **Decision**

**The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made by LinkLiving - Smartliving in meeting Council priorities.**

(c) Salvation Army – Drop in Service (Soup Kitchen)

Elizabeth Hood provided an overview of the report, stating that the project had experienced increased usage over the previous three years. The project relied on volunteers and was jointly funded by the Council and NHS Forth Valley, with additional funding from donations. The project received £10,475 of Council funding.

Members asked if, as the service accessed multiple funding streams, Council funding was essential to service provision. Elizabeth Hood stated that the level of service would be dependent on gaining additional funding from other sources and continued funding from NHS Forth Valley. The project faced increased overheads and in the reporting period had used the entirety of its funding. Elizabeth Hood stated that the project signposted other services and this can lead to reengaging people who were not engaged with other support services.

**Decision**

**The committee approved the report and acknowledged the progress made by Salvation Army – Drop in Service (Soup Kitchen) in meeting Council priorities.**

(d) Central Scotland Regional Equality Council (CSREC)

Celia Sweeney provided an overview of the report, advising that the organisation received £15,200 of Council funding. She stated that the organisation works well with Police Scotland and had success in anti-sectarian community work. However, as the focus of the organisation shifted to incorporate a wider equality agenda the board needed to address its skills and knowledge gap in some areas to provide effective leadership and governance. Further, external funding would expire in March 2015. Clackmannanshire Council had withdrawn its funding and Stirling Council was reviewing its position.

Members discussed the return on funding provided by CSREC projects. Members expressed concern in regard to the use of the £159,000 of public money the organisation had secured as external funding and stated that other organisations operate on significantly less resources. The committee questioned if CSREC tackled a sufficiently broad range of equality issues. Members felt that more information was required to determine if outcomes were being delivered and if the Council's funding of CSREC represented best value.

**Decision**

**The committee requested that a report providing information on outcomes achieved by Central Scotland Regional Equality Council and how the organisation would reprofile if other funding streams were withdrawn is submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.**

(e) Falkirk Community Trust – Sport 4 Youth

Linda Scott provided an overview of the report, advising that the organisation received £38,637 of Council funding. The project encouraged young people to regularly participate in sport. Linda Scott stated that the project faced challenges in regard to staffing and a lack of attendance at some sessions. The project had reviewed its provision and only continued sessions with sufficient demand.

The committee asked how the Council funding was used. Linda Scott stated that two Sports Development Officers were funded through the project and delivered the service.

**Decision**

**The committee approved the report on Falkirk Community Trust - Sport 4 Youth and acknowledged the progress made in meeting Council priorities.**