

## **SE23. FOLLOWING THE PUBLIC POUND 2014/15 MONITORING REPORT – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The committee considered a report by the Director of Children’s Services which provided an update on the work of external organisations in receipt of funding to provide services to children and young people and who fall within the Following the Public Pound (FPP) reporting and monitoring arrangements. Gary Greenhorn provided an overview of the report.

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

### **(a) Denny Community Support Project**

Mark Meechan provided an overview of the report, advising that Denny Community Support Project received a direct grant of £29,250 in the period and a grant of £22,000 from the Community Safety Partnership.

The committee discussed the monitoring of organisations within FPP and the role of joint working agreements. Mark Meechan advised that joint working agreements were developed through negotiation with funded organisations and provided an understanding of actions which would be taken along with outcomes which should be achieved. In response to a question on the structure of monitoring, Mark Meechan advised that there were monitoring officers who were responsible to their normal line managers and directorate. He stated that monitoring was also achieved through the presentation of reports to the committee and auditors, while voluntary organisations of a charity nature also submitted their accounts to the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator (OSCR). Fiona Campbell advised that all monitoring officers were provided with a risk assessment framework which informed the risk rating which is then presented in the reports to committee. Further, the budget process includes a review of external funding and makes recommendations.

### **Decision**

**The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by Denny Community Support Project in meeting Council priorities.**

### **(b) Dennyloanhead Community Project**

Mark Meechan provided an overview of the report, advising that Dennyloanhead Community Project had received £12,561 of Council funding in the reporting period.

The committee asked about digital learning opportunities and who had benefited. Mark Meechan highlighted, as an example of those accessing the courses, that the volunteers and parents who ran the playgroup had used a number of other classes at the project. Further, a number of parents from the playgroup had enrolled their older children in other classes.

Members asked about the accreditation available through courses at the project. Mark Meechan stated that there was an SQA qualification available for IT but that it required completion of ten, one hour units which was not what the learners wanted as it was too much of a time commitment. For young people he advised that the Duke of Edinburgh and Saltire Awards were available.

The committee asked about the provision for older people and what IT courses they accessed. Mark Meechan advised that older people were welcome to participate in any class and that there had been demand for an iPad training course. This had been offered at the Wider Access to School Project.

### **Decision**

**The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by Dennyloanhead Community Project in meeting Council priorities.**

(c) The Powerstation

Mark Meechan provided an overview of the report, advising that The Powerstation received £10,620 of Council funding and £3,500 of in-kind support in the reporting period.

The committee asked for information on the role of community education workers in supporting the project. Mark Meechan advised that there were three Community Learning and Development staff involved with the project, one had a specific focus on capacity building. There had been work undertaken with the management committee which had developed specific skills. The organisation had received funding from the Coalfields Regeneration Trust for a period of three years to train a local person to be a community worker which would build community capacity. The funding would be on stream in early 2016.

### **Decision**

**The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by The Powerstation in meeting Council priorities.**

(d) Workers Education Association

Mark Meechan provided an overview of the report, advising that the Workers Education Association received £46,326 of Council funding and £8,000 of in-kind support for the reporting period.

Members asked about lifelong learning and if the skills developed in adult literacy were found to benefit others and spread through communities. Mark Meechan stated that there was improved confidence in a community where adult literacy improved and that more people were able to participate more widely. He highlighted direct benefits such as the ability to participate in a child's homework and having more confidence in dealing with banks and utility bills.

## **Decision**

**The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by Workers Education Association in meeting Council priorities.**

(e) Dobbie Hall Trust

Mark Meechan provided an overview of the report, advising that Dobbie Hall trust received £14,356 of Council funding for the reporting period.

The committee asked for further information on the repair works required to the fabric of the building. Gary Greenhorn stated that officers from Children's Services and Development Services were looking at the issue to identify costs. It would cost approximately £200,000 to make the building wind and water tight. Therefore the service was working to identify priority areas of work to best utilise the £60,000 which was initially available from the capital programme. Further, the service was working to identify external funds to assist in the repair works due to the historical importance of the building.

Members asked if the most recent accounts for the organisation had been audited. Gary Greenhorn stated that many organisations did not hold their annual general meetings until August and September and that the accounts would be provided to the Council subsequent to this.

## **Decision**

**The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by Dobbie Hall Trust in meeting Council priorities.**

(f) CVS Falkirk & District

Andrew Wilson provided an overview of the report, advising that CVS Falkirk & District received £113,748 of Council funding for the reporting period.

The committee asked for further information on the decrease to Trading Income. Andrew Wilson advised that he did not have further information available but that the Chief Executive had put in place measures to focus on the organisations core activities and funds were aligned to that. The Council was satisfied with the reserves position of the organisation.

## **Decision**

**The committee approved the report and acknowledged progress by CVS Falkirk & District in meeting Council priorities.**