



East
Northamptonshire
Council

Policy and Resources Committee – 2 June 2014

Groundwork Northamptonshire

Purpose of report

To ask Members to consider and approve the rationale for funding support to Groundwork Northamptonshire in 2014/15

Attachment(s)

None

1.0 Background

- 1.1 Groundwork Northamptonshire (Groundwork) was established in 2005 to support community regeneration projects. It operates as a local trust within Groundwork UK and is a company limited by guarantee.
- 1.2 Groundwork has received a range of funding from this council since 2006, originally through a 6-year Service Level Agreement supporting our Area-Based Initiatives (ABI) projects. This SLA included provision for both core (sponsorship funding) of £25K per annum and project funding of £25K per annum to support the ABI projects.
- 1.3 The ABI projects concluded in March 2012. Policy and Resources Committee resolved to continue to provide Groundwork with core funding of £10K per annum in 2012/13 (minute 286 – 5 December 2011). This was to ensure Groundwork retained its commitment in East Northamptonshire to support projects and initiatives that may arise from parishes and community groups. This arrangement continued in the previous financial year (2013/14).
- 1.4 Other district and borough councils and the County Council have supported and currently support Groundwork with funding. Like us these councils have made changes to their funding arrangements since Groundwork was formed.

2.0 Current position

- 2.1 The following table outlines Groundwork's funding arrangements for 2014/15.

| Organisation | Funding support in 2014/15 | Details |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Corby Borough Council | £7.5K | Allocated on the basis of:- £5K core funding £2.5K for projects. |
| East Northamptonshire Council | £10K available | |
| Kettering Borough Council | £10K | No core funding. 4-year SLA (2013-17) - £10K per annum to support and develop volunteering in the borough. Completed year one of the SLA. |

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| Northampton Borough Council | £15K | Given as core funding but linked to investment opportunities in the borough, not specific to individual projects. |
| Northamptonshire County Council | Although not confirmed our information is that no specific funding is available | |
| Borough Council of Wellingborough | Not known | Wellingborough Council has previously been approached by Groundwork to consider funding support. It is not known whether Wellingborough Council provides funding or commissions Groundwork. |
| Daventry District Council | Not known | Daventry District Council has previously been approached by Groundwork to consider funding support. It is not known whether DDC provides funding or commissions Groundwork. |
| South Northamptonshire Council | Not known | South Northamptonshire Council has previously been approached by Groundwork to consider funding support. It is not known whether SNC provides funding or commissions Groundwork. |

2.2 This council has a Community Development Strategy approved by Policy and Resources Committee (minute 282 – 5 December 2011); based on a rationale of supporting local communities in developing community plans. Community Development Officers are supporting the development of a number of community plans. Various projects and initiatives are being identified to help achieve each individual plan's overall vision and outcomes.

2.3 Groundwork is well-equipped to support a range of community projects and initiatives. Although we have not commissioned them to work on projects over the last couple of years, Groundwork has supported a number of other initiatives taking place in East Northants. However we have engaged Groundwork in a shop project involving young people. This project has come about from the development of the Raunds Vision and Community Plan. To enable this project to happen some pump-priming money is required, which would enable Groundwork and the community group to lever-in other funding.

3.0 Proposed way forward

- 3.1 Members are asked to give consideration to how we allocate the £10K provision in 2014/15 to Groundwork. With community-based projects now starting to emerge the funding may be more effectively utilised to support Groundwork's involvement in these projects. It would move the core funding away from just sponsorship and align it to the delivery and achievement of outcomes.
- 3.2 If Members are minded to change the rationale for the allocation, it is proposed to do this progressively. It is expected that community projects will emerge on an ad-hoc basis as community plans etc. become active. For the current financial year, the £10K could be allocated to Groundwork on a 50:50 basis, with £5K for core funding and £5K linked to projects. This would be on similar lines to that provided by Corby Borough Council.
- 3.3 This would be monitored over the next few months and progress reported back to Committee in November 2014. Members will be asked to consider the progress made and determine how the funding might be allocated in future financial years.
- 3.4 The move away from just providing core funding aligns with the way we now allocate our voluntary sector grants. These now focus on the achievement of outcomes in specific thematic areas linked to our corporate outcomes.

4.0 Equality and diversity implications

- 4.1 This report asks Members to confirm how the £10K allocation for Groundwork should be utilised. Groundwork would continue to deliver services and activities in an equitable way, which would be designed to have a positive impact upon communities in East Northamptonshire. If Members were ever minded to withdraw funding to Groundwork, an Equalities Impact Assessment would be required.

5.0 Legal implications

- 5.1 The council has no legal duties or obligations to provide funding support to or commission services from Groundwork.

6.0 Risk management

- 6.1 The conditions surrounding the funding support to Groundwork would be contained in an appropriate Grant Agreement, with procedures for dealing with any default or under-performance.
- 6.2 The support Groundwork would give to local community projects would be controlled by the groups co-ordinating those individual projects.

7.0 Financial and resources implications

- 7.1 The £10K allocation is within the 2014/15 approved revenue budget. As stated above the conditions around the funding would be set out in a Grant Agreement.

8.0 Constitutional implications

- 8.1 There are no constitutional implications arising from this report. However if Members were ever minded to withdraw funding from Groundwork, consideration would need to be given to withdrawing this council's nomination for a councillor to serve on the Board of Trustees at Groundwork.

9.0 Consultation

- 9.1 Consultation on these proposals has taken place with Councillor Gill Mercer, who is

this council's nominated member on Groundwork's Board of Trustees and with the Executive Director of Groundwork.

10.0 Corporate outcomes

10.1 Groundwork's support and activities with community projects and initiatives contribute to our corporate outcomes as follows:-

Strong community leadership – Local community groups are supported in achieving their community plan outcomes, which in turn increases the ability to achieve bigger and better things by local people themselves.

11.0 Recommendations

11.1 Members are recommended to:-

1. Approve the £10K allocation to Groundwork on the basis of £5K core and £5K to support its involvement in community projects in 2014/15. The terms and conditions to be contained in a Grant Agreement.
2. Receive a progress report on the work undertaken by Groundwork on community projects and consider options for future funding at the November 2014 meeting of this committee.

(Reason: To ensure this council's funding support to Groundwork is utilised effectively in achieving this council's corporate outcomes.

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| Legal | Power: Local Government Act 2000 | | | | |
| | Other considerations: None | | | | |
| Background Papers: None | | | | | |
| Person Originating Report: Mike Greenway – Community Partnerships Manager ☎ 01832 742244 ✉ mgreenway@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk | | | | | |
| Date: 13 May 2014 | | | | | |
| CFO | | MO | | CX | |

(Committee Report Normal Rev. 22)