

Report to Portfolio Holder for Communities and Place

Subject: Approval of annual grant agreements to Phenomenal Futures, Citizens Advice Nottingham and District, Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire (RCAN) and Gedling Play Forum for the financial year 2024/25.

Date: 25th March 2024

Author: Community Partnerships Manager

Wards Affected

All

Purpose

To seek approval to provide a grant of £10,000 to Phenomenal Futures, a grant of £40,000 to Citizens Advice Nottingham and District, a grant of £2,500 to RCAN and a grant of £5,000 to Gedling Play Forum, to be expended by each organisation during the period April 2024 – March 2025 for the purposes as set out in this report.

Key Decision

Recommendation(s)

THAT The Portfolio Holder for Communities and Place

- 1) approves the giving of a £10,000 grant to Phenomenal Futures, a £40,000 grant to Citizens Advice Nottingham and District, a £2,500 grant to RCAN and a £5,000 grant to Gedling Play Forum to be expended by the organisations in the financial year 2024/25.
- 2) authorises the Head of Communities and Leisure to enter into grant agreements with Phenomenal Futures, Nottingham and District Citizens Advice, RCAN and Gedling Play Forum to secure how the grants are used and monitor expenditure and performance.

1 Background

- 1.1 In recent years, the Council has provided grants to Phenomenal Futures (formerly WE R HERE), Citizens Advice Nottingham and District and Gedling Play Forum, to enable the provision of financial and family crisis intervention services and creative play activities to residents in areas of high demonstrated need.

In 2023/24 we provided an additional one off grant to RCAN from our UKSPF Events, Heritage and Culture budget, to undertake a consultation process with Parish Councils in Jan – March 2023 and, in response to the consultation, to deliver a Parish Conference in Autumn 2023.

The conference was well received, and the Council has agreed to deliver an annual Parish conference every Autumn as an ongoing engagement opportunity with the Parish Councils. An additional Annual Grant Agreement to the value of £2,500 has therefore been added to the Council's budgets, payable to RCAN for this purpose.

- 1.2 Services of these organisations are generally provided either in outreach settings, at community events or at the central base of each organisation. As well as general advice, guidance, and play activities being available to the wider Gedling population, these grants enable the four organisations to provide targeted support and engagement opportunities in the areas and to the individuals and organisations where most need has been identified.

2 Proposal

- 2.1 It is proposed that the Council continues its support of these organisations and provides a further grant for the 2024/25 financial year to enable all four organisations to continue to provide targeted support, Parish Conference coordination and family craft play activities to vulnerable residents and families and Parishes in the Borough. Pending final grant renewal liaison, a description of the services to be provided by Phenomenal Futures are attached at **Appendix 1**, by Citizens Advice Nottingham and District at **Appendix 2**, by RCAN at **Appendix 3** and by Gedling Play Forum at **Appendix 4**.

3 Alternative Options

- 3.1 To enter into grant agreements and award grants of differing values or with different output levels, aims and target areas/beneficiaries. The values and purposes of the grants have been approved at full Council based on detailed discussions and comparative benchmarking, and the outputs have been reviewed to ensure value for money and maximum benefit to Gedling residents in areas where there is statistical evidence of most need.

- 3.2 Not to enter into Grant Agreements with the three organisations. This option would potentially place some of the most vulnerable residents of Gedling at risk of exclusion from essential intervention, rural engagement and community play services and a reduced quality of life.

4 Financial Implications

- 4.1 The values of each annual agreement are as follows:

- Phenomenal Futures: £10,000
- Citizens Advice Nottingham and District: £40,000
- RCAN: £2,500
- Gedling Play Forum £5,000

5 Legal Implications

- 5.1 The Council will need to enter into grant agreements with these organisations before payment of the grants are made to ensure that the funds are used in the manner intended, performance is monitored and to secure repayment of the funds if the grants are misspent.
- 5.2 Each grant award and agreement will be subject to the Subsidy Control Act 2023 Minimal Financial Assistance (MFA) assessment process, and requires either a signed declaration of Subsidy levels received by each organisation, or a further Principles Assessment, in the event that any of the organisations have been in receipt of MFA in excess of £315,000 in the current and previous two financial years.

6 Equalities Implications

- 6.1 The services provided by the four organisations have a positive impact on the circumstances of recognised disadvantaged groups, localities and rural areas, providing greater financial inclusion, as well as victim / vulnerable families support, rural engagement and rehabilitation and connectedness to social and creative activities in their local area.

7 Carbon Reduction/Environmental Sustainability Implications

- 7.1 All four organisations are required demonstrate environmental sustainability in the delivery of their services, i.e. minimising unnecessary travel and energy use, utilising recycled materials, maximising digital and virtual engagement where appropriate, and supporting and promoting sustainability programmes, awareness and good practice in rural areas.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1: Schedule 1 Phenomenal Futures
- 8.2 Appendix 2: Schedule 1 Citizens Advice Nottingham and District
- 8.3 Appendix 3: Schedule 1 RCAN
- 4 Appendix 4: Schedule 1 Gedling Play Forum

9 Background Papers

- 9.1 None

10 Reasons for Recommendations

- 10.1 To enable the continuation of essential welfare rights, supportive crisis and domestic violence intervention and family play services, and to enable ongoing Parish engagement, all for the wider short- and -long -term benefit of those most vulnerable and / or isolated in Gedling Borough.
- 10.2 To ensure that the funds are expended in accordance with the agreed aims and to enable monitoring of performance.

Statutory Officer approval

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Chief Financial Officer

Approved by:

Date:

On behalf of the Monitoring Officer