

TITLE OF REPORT: **The Impact of the Gateshead Fund 2015-16: a case study**

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Summary

The purpose of the report is to seek Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee's views on the impact of The Gateshead Fund. In particular, the allocation of the Gateshead Fund during 2015/16 to support, develop and build capacity in the voluntary and community sector and to help strengthen local communities.

Cabinet requested that the Gateshead Fund is reviewed by Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of its 2015/16 work programme, to analyse the impact of the funding and to ensure that the Council Plan priorities are met.

Introduction

1. Cabinet agreed the Gateshead Fund on 1st March 2011. The proposal created a fund for the voluntary and community sector to support, develop and build capacity in the sector and to help strengthen communities. The following key principles were agreed:
 - Bringing together different funding streams to create management efficiencies and greater clarity for groups and individuals
 - Ensuring application processes are proportionate and transparent
 - Bringing together capacity building support to enable voluntary and community organisations to secure additional funding from a range of sources and to support greater sustainability.
 - A virtual capacity building team to support the voluntary and community sector to help with building capacity in relation to business planning, fundraising, governance skills, quality standards and policies and procedures.
 - The Gateshead Fund comprises two elements:
 - **Local Community Fund** - for councillors to allocate for local issues with the aim of actively promoting community engagement and development.
 - **Gateshead Capacity Building Fund** – to increase organisations' skills and expertise to diversify their income, expand services or consider different ways of working (e.g. delivering services, collaboration and/or

partnership working) to enable organisations to become more sustainable.

The Gateshead Fund outcomes and priorities

2. The agreed outcomes of the Gateshead Fund are:
 - Increased capacity building and sustainability within the voluntary and community sector
 - Increased provision of services by the voluntary and community sector
 - Improved clarity and equity in commissioning processes
 - Simplified and proportionate application and assessment processes
 - Retention and expansion of councillor community champion role.

3. Agreed priorities for supporting the voluntary and community sector are:
 - To set in place processes and support that simplify the Council's funding relationship with the voluntary and community sector
 - To enable groups and organisations to deliver Gateshead's priorities within Vision 2030 and the Council Plan
 - To continue to support individuals, through grants, to enable residents to achieve their full potential
 - To support and enable the sector to deliver more services within neighbourhoods and across Gateshead Council to support organisations to diversify their income and become less reliant on Council funding and be more self-sustaining
 - To enable the Council to broaden its support to more groups and organisations as the sector develops capacity.

The Gateshead Fund Budget Allocation 2015/16

4. Council agreed the budget allocation for the Gateshead Fund on 26th February 2015. The Capacity Building Fund was allocated £500,000. The Local Community Fund was supported with £110,000.

5. A further £100,000 from Public Health resources was also agreed. The primary purpose of this funding was to enable voluntary and community organisations to apply for support to build capacity as part of the Council's Integrated Wellness model. It was agreed that the fund will be part of the Capacity Building Fund which resulted in a total Gateshead Fund of £600,000.

Impact of the Gateshead Fund in 2015/16

Local Community Fund

Activity in 2015/16

6. The Local Community Fund enables councillors to maximise the opportunities to support a wide variety of local priorities, groups and organisations. Councillor's leadership role to co-ordinate community development

approaches in areas and neighbourhoods has continued to be developed through the Local Community Fund in 2015/16.

7. The criteria enables the Fund to support the delivery of Gateshead's Sustainable Community Strategy, Vision 2030, to maximise opportunities for achieving the Council's ambitions and to lever external opportunities where appropriate.
8. Since the Local Community Fund was first introduced, 700 voluntary and community groups and projects have now been funded and supported. A total of 91 groups and projects totalling over £70,789 were supported through the budget allocation for 2015/16. Appendix 1 highlights the projects supported in each of the wards with the 2015/16 budget allocation.
9. Set out below are some examples of how the Local Community Fund has supported groups and organisations across the Borough with the 2015/16 funding allocation.

Health and Wellbeing

- Activities for residents to help them socialise, keep fit and stay connected to their communities
- Sporting activities, including facilities and equipment
- Holiday Hunger activities
- Community cafés
- Reminiscence projects
- Clothes Bank
- Christmas lunches
- Health and wellbeing newsletter.

Community facilities and activities

- Community centre repairs and equipment e.g. flooring, new fridges etc.
- Young people's activities
- Community festivals including Whickham Community Fayre, Ryton Hirings, and Teams Community Festival
- Trips to regional events such as the Durham Miners Gala and support for local events supporting national celebrations, such as "Big Lunches".

Environmental Improvements

- Tree planting
- Pocket park improvements
- Nature park
- Community tidy ups.

Arts, heritage and culture

- Christmas trees and lighting
- Trips to Beamish and the Durham Miner's Gala
- Burns Night celebrations.

Local Community Fund outcomes

10. The Local Community Fund has helped to deliver the following outcomes:

- Increased councillor community leadership
- Increased community engagement and cohesion
- Increased community capacity
- Increased community involvement in neighbourhoods and environment improvements
- Supported volunteering
- Enhanced health and wellbeing for residents and communities
- Increased community involvement in festivals, events and community centres.

Capacity Building Fund

11. The Capacity Building Fund Advisory Group met on 20th April 2015 and agreed the approach for 2015/16 which was recommended to Cabinet on 14th July 2015.

12. Council agreed that the approach for the Gateshead Fund (Capacity Building Fund) was to apply an open call for applications approach for new and existing groups and organisations based or working in Gateshead, and to ensure that all organisations recommended for funding, except small grassroots organisations, have effectively evidenced capacity building.

13. It was agreed that the Capacity Building Fund will support organisations to build their capacity and sustainability as well as small grassroots community groups to help the Council achieve the outcomes identified within Council Plan 2015-2020:

- Prosperous Gateshead
- Live Love Gateshead
- Live Well Gateshead.

14. It was recommended that during 2015/16 the Capacity Building Fund should also have the following additional outcomes:

- Increased capacity building and sustainability in the voluntary and community sector
- Maximising the opportunities of funding - including exploration of different funding models, leverage of other funding, and collaborations
- An evidenced based approach - funding to support core running costs, project delivery, organisational capacity building activity which must evidence need and impact
- Social value - improved value for money and impact, that would not be achieved by another sector or organisation
- Community impact – impact in the community that will help to achieve strong communities.

Activity

15. In 2015/16, there have been four funding rounds of The Gateshead Fund (Capacity Building Fund). The Council has worked with voluntary and community sector organisations to ensure they contribute to the outcomes referred to above. A total of 184 applications were received requesting funding totalling £967,030. Of these, 131 applications were funded and received assistance totalling £583,197.

The breakdown of applications was as follows:

Fund	Number of applications	Total funding requested	Number recommended	Total amount recommended	Success rate
Main Capacity Building Fund	133	£936,517	82	£554,410	62%
Gateshead Volunteers Month	36	£10,512	34	£9,988	94%
Health & Wellbeing small grants	15	£20,000	15	£18,799	100%
Total	184	£967,030	131	£583,197	

Appendix 2 identifies main Capacity Building Fund spend within each ward for 2015/16.

Appendix 3 identifies Capacity Building Fund, Health and Wellbeing small grants spend within each ward for 2015/16.

16. The Capacity Building Fund supported 33 organisations which were new to the Fund (25%), totalling £136,697 (23%), enabling the Council to achieve the aim of the Gateshead Fund to broaden its support to more organisations. (Appendix 4)

Organisations building capacity

17. In 2015/16, the majority of the organisations funded in the previous year achieved all their milestones.

These milestones were around:

- Management committee and volunteer training to increase skills
- Business planning
- Project development to expand activities, increase efficiencies and income within the organisation
- Developing new ways of working

- Community engagement
 - Developing new bespoke services within communities
 - Increased community ownership.
18. The assessment and funding recommendations process has involved:
- The organisation's progress outlined in the previous year's funding monitoring form (where relevant)
 - Organisation's eligibility against criteria
 - The organisation's progress outlined in the previous year's funding monitoring form
 - Scrutiny of accounts
 - Milestones and targets set by assessing officers.
 - An emphasis on need and impact
 - Outcomes identified in paragraphs 13 and 14 above.

Sporting Grants to Individuals

19. A 'ring fenced' budget of £12,000 is annually allocated from within the Gateshead Fund, for the Individual Sporting Grants and Talented Athlete Scheme programmes. The programmes are aimed to reward and recognise those with sporting talent who reside in Gateshead, and applicants must be affiliated to a sport which is recognised by Sport England. In 2015/16, 53 Individual Sporting Grant awards were made totalling £8,500 and 6 people were awarded Talented Athlete Scheme Grants totalling £3,500.

Appendix 5 shows a breakdown of individuals receiving Sporting Grants by ward.

Building Capacity through Volunteering

Gateshead Volunteers Month

20. Since 2012, £10,000 from the Capacity Building Fund has been ring-fenced to fund groups to support volunteering and take part in Gateshead Volunteers Month.
21. The aim was to provide small grants to enable VCS groups to take part in Volunteers Month events to:
- Raise awareness of the benefits of volunteering
 - Help the Council to deliver the Council Plan outcomes:
 - Prosperous Gateshead
 - Live Love Gateshead
 - Live Well Gateshead
 - Deliver the aims of the Gateshead Volunteer Plan.
22. A total of 34 organisations received a small grant of up to £300, totalling £9,988, to assist with publicity materials and volunteer expenses to either organise their own event or take part in the Celebration event in Trinity Square. The key headlines for Gateshead Volunteers Month 2015 included:
- 62 events took place, with at least one event every day in the Borough.

- 16,450 people attended the Celebration event at Trinity square on 26th June which featured; community group stalls and activities, information, instant volunteering opportunities and entertainment.
 - 56,018 hours were recorded on the volunteer totaliser. This is a 68% increase from last year. Using a calculation from Volunteering England these hours equate to a monthly £778,650 to the Gateshead's economy (approximately £11million per year).
23. Events during Volunteers Month ranged from: drop in and information sessions, coffee mornings, activities to encourage greater use of community facilities, arts, friendships and reminiscence groups, showcasing of projects delivered by volunteers, BBQ's, lunches and celebratory events to more practical taster sessions.

Appendix 6 provides details of Gateshead Volunteers Month small grants spend by ward.

Capacity Building Team and the Gateshead Offer

24. Alongside the Capacity Building Fund, Council Officers and infrastructure support organisations have continued to provide a wide range of advice and guidance through the Gateshead Offer to enable funded organisations to grow and improve. This included helping to develop action plans to assist organisations become more self-sustaining, governance support and advice around establishing new groups such as health and wellbeing support groups and environmental groups.
25. Council Officers within the Neighbourhood Management and Volunteering Team have worked with over 140 organisations, providing advice and support with action planning as part of the Live Well Gateshead commissioned activity.
26. Although GVOC experienced difficulties in 2015, advice and support through The Gateshead Offer continued to be made available to voluntary and community groups and organisations by Council Officers, and as an online resource of 'ready-made' products such as model constitutions, business plan template, cash flow spreadsheets and access to support through the Our Gateshead website.

Capacity Building Fund Key Successes

27. The Fund has continued to support a range of organisations, as follows;
- Organisations seeking to secure or move towards asset transfer and move towards a self-sustaining business model e.g. Clara Vale Village Hall Association, Dunston Family Church, Gateshead Indoor Bowls Centre, Emma Hall, and The Comfrey Project.
 - 5 community led libraries, to develop activities, support development, business planning and sustainability. 3 community led libraries now have short term lease arrangements with the Council (Low Fell, Sunderland Road and Winlaton).

- Organisations which needed support to increase their capacity so that they can deliver services e.g. Deckham Community Association, Edbert's House, 2 Way Tenancy Solutions, Durham Wildlife Trust, North Regional Association for Sensory Support, The Nest Café and Community Room.
- Organisations which wanted to attract income from other sources through a new fundraising strategy or different ways of working. E.g. Friends of Saltwell Park, Gateshead Clubhouse, Gateshead Older People's Assembly, Workplace Gallery.
- Small community groups to increase social capital and deliver activities within neighbourhoods. e.g. environmental groups, uniformed youth organisations, health and wellbeing groups and projects, self-support groups and networks.

28. Analysis demonstrates that the funding supported projects to provide services within neighbourhoods and across Gateshead which assisted the three outcomes within the Council Plan. Appendix 7 shows of how the funding has supported organisations and individuals to deliver the new Council Plan outcomes:

- Prosperous Gateshead
- Live Love Gateshead
- Live Well Gateshead

29. Three examples are set out below which demonstrate the nature of the support provided by the Capacity Building Fund and the outcomes of that support:

a) Dunston Family Church – Dunston Activity Centre

The organisation was awarded £15,335 from the Capacity Building Fund to purchase ICT equipment and develop a café to enable income generation as well as transitional running costs.

The support from the Capacity Building Fund and Council Officers through the Gateshead Offer has enabled the Activity Centre to remain open by;

- Working with Dunston Family Church to take on the asset transfer of the Leisure facility.
- Setting up new systems to enable the effective management and operation of Dunston Activity Centre.
- Developing the café and purchase appropriate equipment to enable the generation of income.
- Providing important transition funding and support in the first year of operation for Dunston Family Church at Dunston Activity Centre.
- Developing significant infrastructure development and change, to strengthen community ownership and involvement.

b) Gateshead Older People's Assembly

Received £9,925 Capacity Building Funding to recruit a Development Manager, build capacity and support the transition of the organisation whilst it moved away from Council grant reliance.

Ongoing support from The Gateshead Offer has enabled the organisation to:

- Develop a business and financial plan for the organisation.
- Secure funding to appoint a volunteer co-ordinator and increase the number of Friendship groups across the Borough, helping to increase volunteering opportunities and combat social isolation amongst older people.
- Secure a wide mix of external funding including Garfield Weston Foundation and the Community Foundation.
- Develop a partnership with Deckham Community Association which has led to enhanced facility management at the Centre and new volunteering opportunities for older people in supporting wider community activities.
- Secure funding for a 'pay what you can' community cafe which launched in March 2016, helping to alleviate malnutrition as well as social isolation amongst older people in Gateshead. The launch of the project generated significant regional and national media coverage.

c) Friends of Saltwell Park

Received a Capacity Building Fund award of £1,120 to hold community engagement events which will gather ideas as to the future of the Park and the Group.

The support from the Capacity Building Fund as well as ongoing support from Council Officers will enable the Group to:

- Produce a consultation/feasibility study which will result in a proposal on how to move forward with the future sustainability and operation of Saltwell Park, helping to mitigate the Council's budget decisions.
- Increase community ownership of Saltwell Park
- Increase volunteering opportunities in Gateshead.

Key Challenges / Future Priorities

30. These have been identified as:

- (1) Continued demand for running costs and project costs. The outcomes for the Capacity Building Fund 2016/17 includes: An evidenced based approach - funding to support core running costs, project delivery, organisational capacity building activity which must evidence need and impact: Developing and mobilising volunteers.
- (2) Maximising the opportunities for funding - including exploration of different funding models, leverage of other funding, and collaborations.

- (3) Continued consideration of the outcomes of the Council's current Review of Funding to the Voluntary and Community Sector in Gateshead.
- (4) The analysis of the Gateshead Fund 2015/16 has demonstrated significant positive impact in the community and contribution to the delivery of the Council Plan outcomes. The future approach will continue to target resources so that they maximise the delivery of the Council Plan, creating strong, vibrant and cohesive communities and a thriving Voluntary and Community sector.

Recommendations

31. Corporate Vitality Overview and Scrutiny Committee is requested to:

- (i) Consider the impact of the Gateshead Fund in 2015/16 on:
 - a. The voluntary and community sector in Gateshead
 - b. Neighbourhoods and strengthening communities
 - c. The extent to which the Gateshead Fund supports delivery of the Council Plan priorities.

Appendices

Appendix 1	Local Community Fund project spend by Ward
Appendix 2	Capacity Building Fund spend by Ward
Appendix 3	Capacity Building Fund Health and Wellbeing small grants spend by Ward
Appendix 4	New Applicants to the Capacity Building Fund 2015/16
Appendix 5	Sporting Grants to Individuals by Ward
Appendix 6	Gateshead Volunteers Month spend by Ward
Appendix 7	Capacity Building Fund spend by Council Plan priorities