

Main Grants 2017-18 report

Name of organisation	Grove Centre (GC)
Date of meeting	7th September 2016
Names and positions of attendees	Ian Warren – Chair of Trustees, GC Rev. Louise Polhill – Trustee, GC David Williams – Coordinator/Centre Manager, GC Lucy Formolli - Cultural Development Officer , LBL James Lee – Head of Culture and Community Development, LBL

Group Name:	Total	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Total funding received 2015-16	£14,625	N/A	£4,875	£4,875	£4,875
Total funding to be received 2016-17	£19,500	£4,875	£4,875	£4,875	

Outcomes	Support
	Provision of a daily coffee bar and Lunch service providing adults with an affordable and healthy meal each day. Providing opportunities for vulnerable and lonely people to meet and enjoy companionship and remove feelings of isolation.
	Delivery of a balanced, affordable meal in a friendly welcoming environment to meet the needs of the client base.
	Provide a special summer and Christmas meal with entertainment and run one outing/event per year
	Provide increased opportunities for people to meet and socialise
	Enable partnership opportunities with Ageing Well in Lewisham for a range of activities meeting local needs, VAL, SLAM and local groups and clubs Open to meet new and yet-to-be-expressed demands
	To provide adults with a range of activities / groups that can engage and provide opportunities to remain healthy and active.
	Networking with clubs, groups and other voluntary and statutory agencies
	Continue to be supportive of existing groups to assist in promoting and developing their activities

	2015-16 Target	2015-16 Q2	2015-16 Q3	2015-16 Q4	2015-16 Total	% Achieved	2016-17 Target	2016-17 Q1	2016-17 Q2	% Achieved TD
Outputs:										
Growing the weekly average by 5% up to 90 people per week attending Lunch Club and receiving a healthy meal	90 PW av 4320 lunches PA	85PW	89.5PW	92 PW 4416 lunches ave PA	92 PW	102%	85 PW 4080 Lunches Ave PA	73 PW	N/A	85%
Results from surveys on how the food served meets customer expectations and value for money. To achieve 80% satisfied and above.	80% satisfaction	80% satisfied	85% Satisfied	86% Satisfied	86% Satisfied	108%	80% satisfaction	90% (April)	N/A	112%
Increase clubs/groups for vulnerable elderly people by one group providing 1 session per week, which engage and work to keep older adults active and healthy.	5 Groups, currently 4	4	5 monthly cinema group added	5	4 groups one club	100%	1	0	N/A	0% - GC are currently in discussion to accommodate elder women's group from Q3 and Deaf Group
Increasing the numbers attending the organised 12 hours per month of social activities linked to Lunch Club (Ave 18 PD)	9 unique users	2	3 (plus 8 unique users through additional social activities	3 successful open day individual numbers not recorded	16	177%	12 unique users	1	N/A	8%

1. Remove funding from under-performing groups/those performing least well

Have you achieved at least 90% of the agreed reporting outputs and outcomes in all quarters since the start of the programme?

All target outputs have been fully delivered with a number exceeding 100%.

The group is working to include another group supporting vulnerable people but can only manage one as the hall is at capacity. LBL officers were shown evidence of the guaranteed bookings list and this is secular and extremely varied regarding activity and age range.

GC is in talks with a Deaf Action group and Turkish Elders organisation to provide sessions each week. However, the GC is not able to deliver further sessions until proposed building development is undertaken.

GC delivered a standing room only Christmas lunch that was well attended and received very positive feedback and also held a special event for the Queens 90th birthday bringing all age groups together and generating new users for the lunch service.

GC is working with external partners such as Ageing Well, Community Connections and the Positive Ageing Council and also work with other local venues, passing on information of bookings they might not be able to fill due to capacity.

GC has achieved over 86% satisfaction for the quality of the food delivered. This success in the satisfaction of their members has caused some reluctance to look into 'FareShare' as there is a fear this may dilute the quality of their menus

Have you achieved all of the wider outcomes outlined in the initial grant application?

As well as filling the centre space with a diverse range of activities and sessions to current capacity, which GC have done exceptionally well and are always open to develop their offer to the most in need. GC recently worked with an organisations to deliver sessions for separated foster siblings.

GC have not let the sensible desire for commercial lets to undermine their values of providing to the most in need and have a rental pricing structure to deliver on this core value system. Charging full rental for commercial lets and parties, weddings etc. Reduced rates for social, not for profit projects such as the AA Step Tuesday, and providing space for free for groups such as Ageing Well in Lewisham to deliver craft, singing and befriending sessions for older vulnerable people.

GC will not be likely to diminish their care/ethos approach to their pricing structure, even with an increased space capacity. Their will to support social and care driven groups is fulfilling a service need, as is their ability to fill other space with full fee paying rentals. They do not let commercial lets interfere with social projects, nor do they focus on social projects to the cost of being financially secure through commercial lets.

If no to either of the above:

- what are the mitigating factors?

- what plans are in place for improving performance?
- what progress has been made against actions agreed with your Development Officer?

N/A Targets have been met in full

Plans for improving performance: GC believe there is the capacity to potentially build on the numbers attending the lunch service each day – and feel that Ageing Well have not facilitated their members attending groups to stay on for lunch as well as they can. With the help of the Lead Officer they will look to work closer with Ageing Well to ensure that group better links up and helps their members take advantage of the healthy lunch available.

There are significant plans for maximising the space at the centre through capital works – discussed in later section.

Lead Officer has pursued the value of FareShare to the organisations as a way of greatly reducing costs of lunches, there is some reluctance but the Chair is open to researching and speaking with other organisations to find out more

Progress made: GC have already delivered extra value by providing space and coffee/tea for attendees to come before lunch to socialise and have also added a bingo session which is very popular for those attending lunch and or coffee to enhance the opportunity for older people to socialise together.

What local support/evidence of need can you identify for the work you are undertaking?

The Grove Centre and Grove Centre Church has a great advantage in understanding its local context and its needs, as its members predominantly live within a short distance of the Centre, and therefore understand the needs of the community. As a result, several projects have come out of the Grove identifying a need and responding, and most of these have graduated to become independent entities.

Concern about an increasingly ageing and isolated population was the catalyst for the Grove’s Lunch service, which has continued responding to local need for forty years. Over the years it has evolved and adapted to enable a wider number of people to access the service (e.g. better access for the mobility impaired), and the expansion of the number of activities and social opportunities attached to the lunches, often in partnership with other organisations demonstrates the continuing need for joined up services for the vulnerable and older population.

There are 4,557 people over 65 living in Sydenham, Forest Hill, Perry Vale, 1825 of whom live alone and are especially vulnerable to isolation and in need of support to remain active and independent.

2. Negotiate reductions and seek alternative funding streams

Are there any proposals that you can put forward that will deliver significant saving against current expenditure? This can include capital investment to change your delivery/business model.

The Grove Centre, in partnership with the Grove Church is looking to make a significant capital investment in the next 3 years. The proposal has been submitted to join up the 3 buildings to make one super building which would dramatically increase capacity for rentals, office space and accessibility (the centre itself recently went through accessibility changes but the listed Georgian hose building is only accessible via a stair lift. They have in principle agreement from planners on this.

The cost is estimated at £575,000 - they have £200,000 ring-fenced for this already. GC has an ambitious plan to have the funding in place within 2 years and works completed within 3 - however there is some experience on the board and with the coordinator, they have managed projects such as this in the past and are confident they can achieve this.

There will be knock on effect on targets as the centre would obviously need to undergo a closure for some time for the works to happen, however the outcome would be a far improved space to deliver more rentals and social projects

What alternative funding streams are you already pursuing?

Many other incomes from, donations, endowments, lunches, rentals, nursery lease, commercial lettings contributions to lunches and others.

It was discussed upping the cost of the lunch per member, per day, the group felt it wouldn't make a difference but Lead officer has suggested that they look at the annual return.

Are there any other funding streams that you can identify that the council can support you to access?

It was discussed that there may be an option to look into if there was any section 106 money available. Also Big Lottery has a strand for capital building projects.

There was a discussion about linking the Grove Centre with Age Exchange who underwent a large capital redevelopment on their building a few years ago (also listed) who may be able to advise.

LBL officers will follow up these discussions with the relevant parties.

3. Work with groups to consider mergers or asset sharing

Are there any organisations doing similar work to you in the borough who you may consider sharing resources or merging with? Who have you considered/approached?

The idea of merging with another organisation has not been considered by the Grove Centre as there was little evidence that any cost efficiencies could be realised, however the individual present at the meeting were open to any ideas put to them.

The potential of combining with Ageing Well, one of their key partners was suggested, but GC were not able to really see any additional benefit in a merger. However they were not against it being raised with Ageing Well as an option.

Are there other groups in the local area that you could share resources with even if they are delivering a different type of service? Again, who have you considered/approached?

There is an opportunity to let the small office and this has been done in the past but it is a very small office. GC would be interested to link with Sydenham Garden as potentially a place for some of their referrals to lunch at the grove centre after begin at Sydenham Garden sessions. Having a place for Grove Centre to refer people to will also be useful.

What support might you need to move these suggestions forward?

Monitoring officer to facilitate a conversation with Sydenham Garden for 2 way referrals

4. Pro-rata reductions across all groups

What would a 25% cut in your grants look like in service delivery terms? What are the wider impacts?

A 25% funding reduction, as with all organisations, is likely to result in some loss of service. The Grove Centre felt they could absorb 5-10% without a significant impact on services.

With 25% they would likely have to look in potentially dropping 1 or 2 days from their lunch service.

GC also highlighted that meeting the living wage and delivering the pension scheme had put them under a bit more pressure financially.

Have you modelled this cut and developed an action plan for its implementation?

Grove Centre, delivering a social requirement as part of their offer, would not drop lunch service days before exploring further revenue elsewhere, initially doing an examination of their commercial let costs, there may be potential for a minimal rent increase across all sessions run in the centre that could offset the cut.

Alternatively there could be a decision to charge more for the social, non-profit delivery, or even think about charging Ageing Well, which currently have the space to deliver older peoples sessions for free as part of the communities that care remit for both organisations. Although it will need to be factored in that Ageing Well are likely to be getting a Main Grant cut also.

The group were keen to emphasise that they will try and do everything they can before considering reducing the lunch service. The Grove Centre is keen to look into FareShare, a slight increase in lunch costs and a slight increase in current rentals before doing that.

Conclusion

Any other comments / areas discussed

Discussion around the timescale and processes to come before the end of this financial year.

Conclusion and recommendation

The Grove Centre is performing well on all targets outputs and outcomes and has identified scope to further improve their offer and have already begun doing so.

GC are letting their centre to full capacity to a number of different organisations and businesses from a nursery to scouts, AA meetings, Dog Training, Older peoples singing group and pole dancing exercise. The group were very keen to demonstrate the secular nature of the centre, even though it is attached to the church and has a spiritual ethos with regard supporting non-profit organisations with reduced rent – these are also not faith based. This is generating a strong and sustainable income for the organisation

The Grove Centre are willing to look into cost saving options such as ‘Fareshare’, but feel that merging with another organisation would give them no real cost savings.

They have a large capital works project in the pipeline and are looking to dramatically increase the size of their venue in the next 3 years. While we feel this is very optimistic in terms of timescales they already have £200,000 of the £500,000 required. LBL have offered to look into some options with them to raise the remaining funds.

The Grove centre are realistic that a 25% cut will result in some loss of service, potentially one or 2 days from the lunch service, however it is likely that the organisation would exhaust all other options before letting that happen, as it is a core driver for their delivery, such as commercial rent raising.

The group offered to advise other organisations on getting the most out of their buildings as they have shown great success here and are currently at capacity, without disrupting their social agenda sessions such as Ageing Well in Lewisham.

It is recommended that The Grove Centre receive a pro-rata cut.

Equalities groups disproportionately impacted by recommendations

Ethnicity:		Pregnancy / Maternity:	
Gender:		Marriage & Civil Partnerships:	
Age:	x	Sexual orientation:	
Disability:		Gender reassignment:	
Religion / Belief:			

Commentary and potential mitigations:

GC provides services primarily for older people.

A funding reduction may have a negative impact on service delivery and there is a risk to 1 or 2 days lunch service but the Centre are exploring a range of options to minimise the impact on direct service delivery.