

Scope of project review – Jigsaw

Purpose

The aim of the review is to determine the evidenced impact of the Jigsaw project against the original intended outcomes of continuing to provide meeting space, information, signposting and support to local residents and offer appropriate services and assess if the project has addressed the need it was designed to meet.

This review will feed into the future funding decisions for the Jigsaw project, based on the evidenced impact the District Council funding has provided so far.

Background

Jigsaw is a community hub within a parade of shops in Dimbles Lane, North Lichfield (Curborough ward). The premises are owned by Midland Heart (Registered Housing Provider). Following a lengthy period when the unit was empty, it was converted to the current community use in 2006. Since this time, the Hub has been managed by the community development team employed by Lichfield District Council and supported by volunteers (many from the North Lichfield Initiative). Various voluntary groups use the facility for meetings and other events and there are opportunities for local residents to 'drop in'.

As a consequence of the Fit for the Future programme phase 1 (and the necessity to make savings of £1.7 million) in 2013 the District Council was no longer financially able to support the community development team and the team was disbanded. In order to keep the Jigsaw hub open discussions with partners took place to explore alternative options for the management of the Hub. Fusion Credit Union expressed an interest in managing the hub on behalf of the council and a serve level agreement was entered into on 1 January 2014.

At the time there were also Community hubs in Burntwood and Fazeley and as a result of the discontinuation of the community development team, it was decided that LDC would continue to manage the hubs, albeit remotely. In 2017 the management of the community hub at the Old Mining College, Burntwood was transferred to Burntwood Town council and the community hub at Mill Lane, Fazeley was closed in 2018 due to limited use. The NLI closed in 2016.

A subsequent funding agreement was entered into with Fusion Credit Union from April 2016, this agreement ends 31st March 2019. Fusion Credit union also use Jigsaw as their main office base. The premises were previously let on a peppercorn rent but in 2017 Midland Heart introduced a rent of £7,000. The amount awarded under the current funding agreement is 9,663 per year.

The current funding agreement specifies the following outcomes:

- That Jigsaw continues to operate as a sustainable Community Hub with maximum usage maintained
- That Jigsaw is a safe and welcoming place for users, groups, and members of the public to meet and access services
- That Jigsaw is accessible to service users with hours that reflect their needs
- That volunteers are developed, supported and used effectively

Review Outcome

As a result of this review we will be able to answer the following questions:

- Has the project delivered the intended outcomes? What contribution is it making to the delivery of the Strategic Plan?
- What difference does Jigsaw make for the local community? Are there any equality, diversity and human rights implications? Are there any crime and safety implications? What are the health and wellbeing implications?
- Is the LDC grant funding the only and/or most appropriate way to fund the project and achieve these outcomes?
- Is the project delivering value for money?
- Can the project be improved to deliver greater benefit?

Methodology

In order to carry out this project review, the following activities will be undertaken:

- **Review of the funding agreements and monitoring returns/visits or reports**
This will be done to determine the delivery of outputs and outcomes against those intended in the original project design. The review will look at what impact the community hub has on the local community, the difference it makes and where, if any, the gaps are and if these could be addressed. It will also allow a financial review to look at the actual costs against the original budget and make an assessment of value for money.
- **Review of alternative community venue provisions in the area**
This will include an examination of alternative community venues in the area, their opening hours, costs and a review of the types of activities they run.
- **Evaluation forms for users**
If not already available from the organisation, evaluation forms will be designed and provided for the project to distribute to users as a means of evaluating the impact on individuals when they access the building and where the users come from.
- **Evaluation forms for volunteers**
If not already available from the organisation, evaluation forms will be designed and provided for the project to distribute to volunteers as a means of evaluating the impact on individuals of volunteering on the project.
- **Number and purpose of visits to the centre**
A review of the data collected by the project about visitors to the centre including numbers and purpose of visit divided into categories to consider if there are unique functions Jigsaw offers.
- **Review of the projects sustainability strategy**
To include a review of any forward planning the project has undertaken to consider the long term sustainability of Jigsaw and the level of funding which would be required to continue.