

SCRUTINY BOARD

Agenda Item: 9

Ward: All

Portfolio: Corporate Services and Projects

FROM: Cllr Liz Leyshon
Portfolio Holder

Date: 25th January 2021

SUBJECT: Performance Review for SPARK Somerset Voluntary Sector Partnership Funding 2020/21

Internal Use Only: Please complete sign off boxes below prior to submission to Democratic Services			
Report Sign off	Seen by:	Name	Date
	Chief Executive/ Deputy Chief Executive(s)	Tracy Aarons	11/01/2021
	Legal	Lesley Nolan	14/01/2021
	Finance	Richard Bates	14/01/2021
	Group Manager	Sara Skirton	11/01/2021
	Portfolio Holder	Liz Leyshon	13/01/2021
	Ward Member(s)		
Summary:	The Council allocated core funding to our partner SPARK Somerset of £25,000 for the financial year 2020/21. This report accompanies a presentation which will be given to Scrutiny Board on 25 January by Katherine Nolan, their Chief Executive Officer, which will cover service performance for the year to date including the impact of COVID-19.		
Recommendation:	Scrutiny Board is asked to note the report.		
Direct and/or indirect impact on service delivery to our customers and communities:	Services provided by SPARK Somerset provide support to the voluntary sector in Mendip, our residents and communities. SPARK Somerset is a voluntary organisation which provides advice, guidance and training to the voluntary sector and community groups. They have developed a comprehensive package of support for COVID-19 and are leading the recruitment of volunteers for the vaccination programme in Somerset.		
Contribution to Corporate Priorities:	Links to all Corporate Priorities: Make Mendip a fairer place; Deliver on our climate and ecological commitment, Protect and enhance our towns and rural communities.		
Legal Implications:	No Legal implications for the purposes of this report. Funding agreements are in place for this funding.		

Financial Implications:	Funding was allocated within the Council's overall 2020/21 budget.
Climate Change Risks and Opportunities:	The work of the SPARK Somerset has a positive impact on climate change through supporting the recruitment of volunteers and governance and funding support for voluntary sector groups who work on climate change and ecological projects
Impact on Service Plans:	The allocation of this voluntary sector funding was included in the Corporate Services business plan and budget.
Crime and Disorder Implications:	Currently, there are none to note.
Equalities Implications:	SPARK Somerset have an Equal Opportunities policy in place, which is in line with the MDC policy.
Risk Assessment and Adverse Impact on Corporate Actions:	<p>The work of SPARK Somerset has a positive impact on actions associated with the following corporate priorities</p> <p>Make Mendip a fairer place; Deliver on our climate and ecological commitment and Protect and enhance our towns and rural communities.</p>

INTRODUCTION

1. The Council has provided core funded for SPARK Somerset via an annual Funding Agreement (FA) for several years. The core funding for 2020/21 is £25,000. This funds a part time Community Development Worker, who lives and works in Mendip.
2. Performance Reviews form a part of the FA and assist in monitoring and assessing the social impact, community benefits and the 'value for money' aspect of the council's funding.
3. Regular meetings are held to aid partnership working and are also part of the performance review process. These meetings would normally be at least quarterly, but this changed in March 2020, when the first national lockdown was announced. Regular meetings are now held on a fortnightly basis and more frequently when required.
4. SPARK Somerset is voluntary sector organisation which provides information, advice and training to the voluntary and community sector in Mendip. They also, run the Somerset Volunteer service. They work in close collaboration with the Council and have made a significant contribution to the COVID-19 community response and support in Mendip. They are supporting the recruitment of volunteers for the vaccination programme in Somerset.
5. As part of the Council's monitoring process, annual performance reviews are undertaken; these reviews are measured against agreed objectives and outcomes. These will be covered in the presentation

RECOMMENDATION

Scrutiny Board is asked to note the report and the presentation

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Background Papers

The presentation will be circulated and published following the meeting.

More information about SPARK Somerset can be found on their website:
<https://www.sparksomerset.org.uk/>