

Community Reference Group – 22 March 2022
10am-12pm @ SAVS

Attendees		Apologies
Active Life	Trust Links	Garon Park CIC
CAST	Southend YMCA	Southend Emergency Fund
Carers First	Trinity Family Centre	EPUT
Leigh Lions / Southend Pier Museum	MSE Healthcare Partnership	Aspirations Day Program
Metal	Age Concern Southend	Board Members in attendance; Jenny & Peter
One Love Project	The Art Ministry	
SEAS	Local Resident	
SECH	SVP	
Southend Carers		

Presentation on progress to date (see slides).

Feedback from Group Discussion;

Small Vs/ Large

- Continue grants for smaller organisations to help with core costs and projects.
- Invite bids to support better coordination, capacity building, training, sharing resources, collaboration.
- Larger charities could support smaller charities, voluntary groups, faith groups etc. Demonstrate to how this work can contribute to 2050, capacity building etc.
- There was a general agreement that the small funding projects was a good idea and was plugging a grant gap (one participant felt strongly that unless we increased our funding pot quite considerably we should stick to the present process!!)
- Some of the Volunteers at X feel that some of their ideas & Projects are not taken into account because they belong to a charity that has a turnover more than £100,000.
- CRITERIA? –We leave out some communities because of financial position of the charity that serves them.

Identifying Opportunities / Accessing the Most Isolated

- Perhaps some action research could be commissioned to further identify gaps, where council and NHS services are failing people.
- Can you link up independent traders with charities to direct their passion to support under-represented groups, vulnerable / disadvantaged.
- Improve physical spaces to improve mental health.
- Encourage and support.... do not disempower... boots on the group to boost trust.
- Mapping exercises already carried out by SBC – explore for instance research conducted on the night economy of Southend.
- Antisocial behaviour – criminal activity and poverty are linked.
- Isolation is faced by both young and old.
- Explore areas not benefiting from levelling up funding already coming through.

Sector Capacity Building and Collaboration

- Support volunteer community – skills and training.
- A mentoring type set up for smaller charities to piggy back the larger charities and gain some experience as well as being able to access funding through the larger charities bank accounts and financial stability. This could be managed and instigated by the board.
- Possibly becoming more proactive as a board to help coordinate, liaise and promote cooperation between the local charities, council and statutory services. Sharing knowledge, expertise, experience and professionalism for the benefit of all Southend residents.
- It would be great if we could see ideas & initiatives which are sustainable in the long term
- We need organisations & people to collaborate to deliver on these.

- We had a long discussion on all charities being able to unite & support each other, rather than in isolation.
- LOOK AT THE CORE ISSUES (Listen & Understand)
- Look at the Arts Council “Easy Read” options for accessible ways of communicating, using simple language & images.

Office Space / Hubs

- The idea of using existing hubs and facilities to help with office space and core costs for smaller concerns was well received.
- This could be a centre that welcomes & supports local people to build trust. “Get to know” sessions so that people feel they belong. It allows a natural support plan and allows the right partners to support people at the right time. Should also be linked to outreaching to bring people in.

Young People

- What gaps are there already and what is currently funded? An annual survey could be useful.
- Use schools to find out about issues for children and young people...
- There is not a city wide young people’s strategy.
- Southend Carers have carried out research with young carers to better understand the impact of drug and alcohol. Informal engagement has been more valued and successful.
- “MAKE YOUR MARK” REPORT. Views from Children and Young People in Southend

Reporting

- Keep M&E proportionate – a meeting / visit to charities should suffice.
- Awards for all tend not to ask for reports these days.

Emergency Funding

- Emergency Funding would be useful for unexpected costs.
- YES EMERGENCY FUNDS – We should visit all applications where people are not able to express this well on an application.

If I had the £1.5m I would spend it on...

- Building sustainability in the Third Sector.
- Creating and bringing services of Southend together in a more collective collaborative and effective way.
- Invest in the ‘social education’ of children to enable them to grow into community minded adults. We need more good citizens!
- Creation of community hubs and spaces that are inclusive.
- Cohesive plan to reduce social isolation by building integrated communities a sense of belonging for all.
- Young women to enable them to see their worth, re. skill etc.
- Youth Centre / one stop shop for young people.
- Support for young adults carers at risk.
- Invisible carers from ethnically diverse communities.
- Invest into x 4 key community hubs (existing and new) that cover localities. Open / accessible to all groups / services young – old potential for 24 hour support offer in each.
- Invisible people before it’s too late.
- More support for younger people, understand what their problems are now and nip them in the bud before they get worse.
- £1.5m should be spent on Arts & Cultural projects & programs which deliver on all Southend 2050 outcomes.
- We should spend all the £1.5m on refugees, asylum seekers, immigrants, victims of modern slavery and those with no recourse to public funding.

Application Process Feedback

- A form for applications would be easier and would supply us with the relevant info.
- More advertising highlighting the CIB and how to access our funds.