

ROTHERHAM BOROUGH COUNCIL – REPORT TO MEMBERS

1.	Meeting	Cabinet Member for Communities and Cohesion
2.	Date:	27th January 2014
3.	Title:	Evaluation of Community First Neighbourhood Match Fund
4.	Directorate:	Neighbourhoods and Adult Services

5. SUMMARY

This report provides an evaluation of the impact of the Community First Neighbourhood Match Fund in Rotherham to 31st December 2013. The report also details potential next steps in advance of the programme ending on 31st March 2015.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Cabinet Member,

- notes and comments on the contents of this report

7. BACKGROUND

Community First is a four year, £80m government programme, being led by the Cabinet Office's Office for Civil Society (OCS). There are three elements:

- £30m Neighbourhood Match Fund i.e. a small grants programme for some of the most deprived areas in England, being administered by the Community Development Foundation (CDF)
- £50m national Endowment Match Challenge
- Community Organisers

Ipsos MORI have been commissioned by the OCS to undertake regular evaluations of the Community First Neighbourhood Match Fund. Their first evaluation found that:

- £12.5m has been awarded by 600 Panels to 8,500 projects
- There are four main wellbeing project types;
 - o Helping people to learn
 - o Encouraging people to be active and healthy
 - o Connecting people together
 - o Encouraging people to volunteer
- There have been few wholly new projects however this is likely to change as Panels make new local connections.

The objective of this report is to evaluate the impact of Community First Neighbourhood Match Fund in Rotherham to 31st December 2013 and to consider next steps in advance of the programme ending on 31st March 2015.

The paper will be of interest to our local Community First Panels. It will be forwarded to the Cabinet Office to assist with their evaluation too.

7.1 EVALUATION

The OCS saw Community First as:

- A means of enabling small social action projects, encouraging individuals/groups to bring change to some of the most deprived communities in the country
- A tool to support new and existing projects
- Part of a broader power shift, putting local residents in the driving seat, building their capacity and confidence to develop community led solutions

In terms of evaluating the impact of the Community First Neighbourhood Match Fund in Rotherham, the OCS aims detailed above have been used as a basis for this evaluation.

Has Community First enabled small social action projects, encouraging individuals/groups to bring change to some of the most deprived communities?

In short the answer is yes. Community First is delivering £712,000 into voluntary-community sector projects in some of the borough's most deprived neighbourhoods. To date, £396,964 has been awarded by the 11 Ward based Community First Panels to 255 projects. Please see **Appendix I** Community First

Panel funded projects. The Ward based Community First Panel priorities reflect the deprived neighbourhood priorities (Please see **Appendix II** Community First Panel priorities and deprived neighbourhood priorities). The allocation of the Community First Neighbourhood Match Fund was centrally determined. 11 of the 21 Rotherham wards were identified as eligible for this funding, 7 of which include at least one deprived neighbourhood. Community First funding has therefore provided an important source of funding geared to the local deprived neighbourhoods.

Taken together, Panel priorities fall into several broad themes connected to the deprived neighbourhoods and to the wellbeing themes identified by Ipsos MORI.

Ipsos MORI	Rotherham themes	Description
Helping people to learn	Children and families	diversion, engaging parents in learning, ensuring best start in life
	Skills training	access to information, adult skills, managing debt/household budget
Encouraging people to be active and healthy	Vulnerable groups	isolation/loneliness amongst the elderly, health issues e.g. alcohol, drugs etc
	Health	healthy eating, exercise, drinking/smoking and mental health issues
	Crime/ASB and environment	safe/clean streets, tackling hotspots, improving appearance of area
Connecting people together and Encouraging people to volunteer	Bringing communities together	community heritage/cohesion/development

The table below shows that:

- **Children and families** is a priority in 10 of the 11 areas, attracting 32% of the funding to date, a lot of which has been concentrated on diversionary activities. More focused projects include pre-school provision, supporting children and families and engaging parents in their childrens education
- **Skills training** is another priority in 10 of the 11 areas, attracting 7% of funding. The level of funding may be a reflection on the projects available to deliver and the level of awards. Projects have typically provided education and training, and both personal and professional support e.g. life skills, CV writing etc
- **Vulnerable groups** is a priority in 10 of the 11 areas too, attracting 15% of funding. Key groups helped include the elderly, people living in food poverty, vulnerable women and their families, the homeless and the new migrant communities
- **Crime/ASB and environment** is a priority in 7 of the 11 areas, attracting 14% of funding, a lot of which has been concentrated on community groups/projects seeking to improve appearance of their area
- **Health** is a priority in 5/11 areas, attracting 6% of funding
- **Bringing communities together** is a priority in 4/11 areas, attracting 26% of funding. Bringing communities together and building capacity has been identified as an important issue

Priority	Panel priority	Allocation (%)
Children and families	10/11	32
Vulnerable groups	10/11	15
Skills training	10/11	7
Crime/ASB and environment	7/11	14
Health	5/11	6
Bringing communities together	4/11	26

A full list of the projects granted funding is available, both Panel by Panel and by their priority/theme. This may be of particular interest to local Community First Panels, to monitor the progress of their projects and look at what other Panels have been funding.

Attached at **Appendix III** are some best practice examples of projects. The examples highlight the range of projects supported, the importance of their work in particular to the local deprived neighbourhoods agenda and key outputs/outcomes.

Has Community First been a tool to develop new and support existing projects?

The answer is Yes and No. New projects have been developed, however, similar to the findings from Ipsos MORI, Community First funding has largely supported existing projects e.g. 137 of the 229 grants (60%), totalling £267,000 of funding (78%), awarded by 10 of the 11 Panels to date (excl Rawmarsh) went to 38 groups/organisations. 18 have been supported by 2+ Panels. This highlights, however, problems with the process and the relative strength of the voluntary-community sector i.e. difficult for Panels to jointly scale projects, projects inevitably apply for funding given level of available awards etc. Panels have, however, increased their knowledge of and links to the work of existing projects e.g. pre-school providers and Childrens Centres in Rotherham East, Canklow Community Connections, Rotherham CAN and Rotherham In Root in Boston Castle etc

Has Community First put local residents in the driving seat, built their capacity and confidence to develop community led solutions?

The answer is Yes and No. Cabinet Office have commended the links made between Community First and deprived neighbourhoods in Rotherham. Feedback from Panel voluntary-community sector members has highlighted how much they have welcomed the opportunity to work with Councillors and senior officers. Across all areas, local residents have been involved in setting local priorities, approving projects for funding and projects representing community led solutions to local issues. The process has been a positive experience and has confirmed that there are groups/organisations in Eastwood, Canklow, Maltby etc who could with the right support play a more leading role in any future work.

7.2 NEXT STEPS

A further round of Panels need to be convened as soon as possible to:

- Allocate any remaining Year 3 funding by 31st March 2014 deadline. 6 of the 11 Panels still have £21,065 to allocate.

- Monitor the progress of their Years 1, 2 and 3 projects and to look at what other Panels have been funding
- Begin planning for Year 4, where the highest percentage of Community First funding is concentrated i.e. 33% of funding (£209,303). Panels are required to allocate Year 4 funding by 31st December 2014 – therefore Panels have the most funding to allocate in the shortest timescale.

There is also merit in beginning to consider now what will happen beyond 31st March 2015, the end of the Community First programme. The Endowment Match Challenge (EMC), being managed by the South Yorkshire Community Foundation (SYCF), will run from 1st April 2015. Their challenge is to attract company contributions which the Government will match. Post 31st March 2015, any monies raised through EMC will be rolled into SYCF's small grants process. We have asked SYCF what constructive help we could give e.g. how we could work to build sustainability by bridging the Community First Neighbourhood Match Fund and the EMC element of SYCF's small grants programme.

There have been difficulties associated with this external funding, however, the funding has been welcomed and is being well used. The key now is planning for Year 4 and life beyond Community First.

8. FINANCE

Community First is enabling funding of £712k to vol-com sector projects.

9. RISKS AND UNCERTAINTIES

To date, all deadlines have been met in order to secure and draw down Community First funding. Community First is external funding and any contractual arrangements are between CDF and groups/organisations.

10. POLICY AND PERFORMANCE AGENDA IMPLICATIONS

Community First supports priority activity within our most deprived communities; strengthening community based activity and resilience and promoting community based action through voluntary and community sector partnerships.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS AND CONSULTATION

Cabinet Office letter to Local Authority Chief Executives, 21st September 2011 plus various CDF guidance.

Update Reports to Area Assembly Chairs Meetings.

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COMMUNITY FIRST PANEL FUNDED PROJECTS IN ROTHERHAM

PANEL	YEARS 1 & 2		YEAR 3	
	Number of projects	Number of projects	Balance remaining (£)	Next Panel
Rotherham West	13	7	0	TBC
Wingfield	18	9	2,327	TBC
Keppel	9	4	626	TBC
Rotherham East	27	16	1,459	TBC
Boston Castle	16	8	5,097	TBC
Hoover	14	7	0	TBC
Rawmarsh	20	6	9,573	Tues 14 th Jan
Valley	18	9	1,983	TBC
Silverwood	8	6	0	TBC
Rother Vale	11	10	0	TBC
Maltby	11	8	0	TBC
TOTALS	165	90	21,065	

COMMUNITY FIRST PANEL PRIORITIES VS DEPRIVED NEIGHBOURHOODS PRIORITIES

COMMUNITY FIRST	Priorities (Years 3-4)	DEPRIVED NEIGHBOURHOODS	Priorities
Rotherham West	-Support families, children and young people	Ferham/Masbrough	-Education
	-Address isolation/loneliness amongst over 50's, people vulnerable/with disabilities		-Health
	-Provide health and wellbeing including healthy eating/exercise		
	-Increase availability/awareness of employment skills/training, skills and aspirations of young people, independent living and money matters following welfare reform		
	-Improve appearance of area & increase community safety		-Crime/ASB and Environment
Wingfield	“	X	X
Keppel	“	X	X
Rotherham East	-Increase amount of/take up of current preschool provision	Eastwood East Dene	-Education
	-Increase availability/awareness of job/skills/training opportunities/benefit advice		-Adult Skills
	-Diversionary activities for young people to address ASB		-Crime/ASB
	-Bring communities together		-Community engagement
Boston Castle	-Ensure best start in life for children and their families	Canklow (C) Town Centre (TC)	-Learning healthy lifestyles (TC)
	-Prevent isolation/loneliness amongst elderly		-Educational attainment and skills (TC)
	-Bring communities together		
	-Enable people to access and/or provide people with skills training for work/budgets		-Support/build community (C)
	-‘Other’		-Improve access to employment opps (TC)
Hooper	-Ensure best start in life for children and families	X	-Plan/deliver different (C)
	-Support those who are vulnerable within community		-Target prolifics (C)
	-Support growth of a sustainable/competitive local economy		-Reduce crime/ASB (TC)
			-Work with willing (C)

COMMUNITY FIRST	Priorities (Years 3-4)	DEPRIVED NEIGHBOURHOODS	Priorities
Rawmarsh		Rawmarsh East	- Employment/employability/education
	-Reduce isolation and deprivation		-Health
	-Make the area look better		-Crime/ASB, Housing and Environment
	-Bring generations together -Celebrate identity and achievement -Improve connection and communication		-Community engagement
Valley	-Support growth of a sustainable/competitive local economy	East Herringthorpe	- Employment/employability/education
	-Ensure best start in life for children and families -Support those who are vulnerable within community		-Health
			-Crime/ASB, Housing and Environment
			-Community engagement
Silverwood	-Support growth of a sustainable/competitive local economy	Dalton/Thrybergh	- Employment/employability/education
	-Ensure best start in life for children and families -Support those who are vulnerable within community		-Health
			-Crime/ASB, Housing and Environment
			-Community engagement
X	X	Dinnington	-Keeping safe
			-Housing and Environment
			-Children/young people/families
			-Jobs/training
			-Health
Rother Vale	-Crime/ASB and facilities for young people	X	X
	-Communities/environment		

	-Health of vulnerable individuals i.e. warmth, drugs/alcohol and teenage pregnancies		
	-Access/learn new skills		
	-Community heritage		
X	X	Aston	-Young people
			-Employment
			-Health
			-Community engagement
Maltby	-Crime/ASB/safe environment	Maltby	-Crime/ASB
	-Communities/environment		-Housing and Environment
	-Health of vulnerable individuals i.e. drugs/alcohol		-Health
	-Learn new skills and raise confidence/aspiration		-Skills/employability
	-Diversionary activities for young people		-Children/young people/families

SOME BEST PRACTICE EXAMPLES OF COMMUNITY FIRST PROJECTS

Children and families

Coleridge Childrens Centre c/o Erskine Rd Community Centre (Rotherham East)

- Parent and toddler group, targeting new arrivals to Eastwood, providing high quality early years learning, highlighting to parents importance of play and how to prepare and cook healthy low cost meals
- Gone from strength to strength – drawn interest and praise from a range of professionals

Badsley Moor Lane and St James Parent and Toddler Groups (Rotherham East)

- Parent and toddler groups, targeting parents/carers and children in East Dene – aim was to expand
- Promotional material and open days have increased membership and enabled upgrades

Unity Centre Nursery (Rotherham East)

- In partnership with Roma Khamoro project aimed to increase take up of pre-school provision by Roma Slovak families
- Ran family learning sessions, raising awareness of child safety, dangers of smoking during pregnancy and of healthy eating

Learning Together ABC Family Challenge (Rotherham East, Boston Castle, Valley and Maltby)

- Encouraged parents to become involved in childrens learning
- Ran 10 sessions in central area, received positive feedback from schools, Childrens Centres and families

Skills training

The Learning Community (Valley)

- Aiming to increase take up of life skills and employment support by fostering “Community Advocates”
- Outreach team will provide support too e.g. CV writing, job-search/interview techniques etc

Valley Employment Surgery (Valley)

- Increase employment prospects by hosting weekly drop in employment surgeries looking at CVs, application forms, job-search and interview preparation, setting up e-mail addresses etc
- Aiming to persuade potential employers to come and do talks too

Brampton and Cortonwood Drop In Employment Advice and Mentoring Schemes (Hoover)

- Employing a sessional worker to provide advice and guidance to the unemployed
- Taking referrals from Job Centre and working in partnership with Young Peoples Connexions Service

- Enable people to apply for a small bursary to access training, travel costs and buy clothing for interviews

Rush House Online (Rotherham East)

- Accommodate homeless young people
- Provide access to ICT equipment and internet to find education and employment opportunities
- Take up to date has exceeded expectations – targeted 60, at mid-point 65 beneficiaries

JMLB Genesis (Rotherham East and Boston Castle)

- Targeted unemployed learners to increase familiarity with IT, given shift to on-line systems
- Ran two 15 week courses

WEA (Rother Vale)

- Targeting people aged 19+ in Treeton who have limited or no ICT skill
- 7 week course will cover basic word processing, internet and e-mail

Active Regen (Rotherham East and Boston Castle)

- Target young people through sport to provide accredited/non accredited qualifications/work experience
- Skills to include decision making, budgeting and time management

SWITCH Inclusion Services CIC (Boston Castle)

- Offer financial education covering banking, best energy deals, credit unions, doorstep lending, loan sharks etc and opportunity to meet a money mentor
- Will link up with Canklow Community Connections

Vulnerable groups

Clifton Learning Partnership Tackling Food Poverty (Rotherham East)

- Targeting most financially vulnerable families, identified by schools, Children Centres and IYSS, by offering a 1 day session during each school holiday period when people will prepare food, receive a hot meal and a food bag to take away
- 294 participants, predominantly Roma, but White British and British Asian too, and 10 volunteers

Stepping Stones Cook and Eat (Maltby)

- Cooking course targeted at vulnerable families on a low budget
- 25 participants - new parents now visiting the centre

Food AWARE CIC Valley Food Value! (Valley)

- Cookery lessons to be delivered to an accredited Level 2 Certificate in Food Handling
- Will be run in partnership with High Greave School and parish council

GROW Family Support (Wingfield, Keppel, Rotherham East and Boston Castle)

- Support women and families experiencing unemployment and benefit problems, mental health, isolation etc by offering one to one or peer group support
- In one area, 51 participants ie 19women/32children, in another 37 participants ie 15women/22 children

- Gained employment, took up volunteering, secured tenancies and issued warm packs

Maltby One Stop Shop Advice Service (Maltby)

- Free welfare rights and debt advice service
- Take up to date has exceeded expectations

Roma Khamoro (Rotherham East)

- Develop people champions through volunteering who will become role models by running weekly advice service and sessions on community pride
- Up to 50 people attending weekly advice service and another 3 being mentored as community ambassadors completed a litter pick and supported development and delivery of last year's Eastwood Village Fun Fest

Crime/ASB and environment

Rotherham CAN Casting Innovations (Wingfield, Keppel, Rotherham East, Boston Castle, Hooper, Valley, Silverwood and Maltby)

- A unique, mobile recycling education programme using waste aluminium which begins with initial litter picks and awareness raising and culminates with a micro-recycling scheme producing saleable items
- Cabinet Office discussed project with Rotherham CAN

Canklow Community Connections Adopt A Street (Boston Castle)

- Newly formed TARA seeking to encourage community involvement and a sense of pride by adopting and cleaning designated streets then installing signs
- Two streets have been cleaned up in partnership with Rotherham CAN
- There are now 8 active participants in this group

Ferham Community Group Clean ups (Rotherham West)

- Tidy ups engaging families and children
- First event in September 2013, run in partnership with Streetpride, attracted 50 participants especially adults and children from the Roma community

China Town TARA and Model Village Community Association (MVCA) (Maltby)

- Both received funding to run 4 community action days including skips, litter picking and wild flower garden / bulb planting Tidy ups engaging families and children
- Provided IT courses and equipment for junior sports teams too
- MVCA days attracted a total of 400 participants

Health

Rotherham in Root (Boston Castle)

- Development of a Canklow community garden, enabling people to grow their own produce
- Tools and other equipment have been donated by local partners – garden now well established
- Exploring facility for a lock up store

Eastwood / East Dene Cookery Course (Rotherham East)

- 6 week course hosted by Rotherham Fire Station where people will learn how to budget and cook healthy meals on a small income in a peer support group
- Involves local Councillors and ASDA supermarket

High Greave School Parent/Carer and Toddler Group (Valley)

- Healthy lifestyle project
- Will start with cookery workshop and exercise including swimming and zumba

Bringing communities together

Bowling Clubs (Wingfield, Keppel, Rother Vale and Maltby)

- Following changes to lease and maintenance arrangements, several bowling clubs received funding to enable volunteers to undertake work
- Benefitting 6 clubs; Barkers Park, Greasbrough, Treeton, Thurcroft, Coronation Park and Maltby Main

Inspire Rotherham (Rotherham West, Wingfield, Keppel, Valley and Silverwood)

- Builds on a University of Sheffield project where children will be trained as researchers and supported to lead a community action project
- Culminates in a local event presenting
- 50 young people participated in Silverwood project

EVCA Fun Fest

- Annual event aimed at bringing all sections of community together
- Diverse planning group ensured 2013 event was well attended with c 500 people