
REPORT TO THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE

PORTFOLIO: COMMUNITIES, HOUSING & HEALTH

REPORT FROM DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITIES AND HEALTH

SUBJECT: PROCESS FOR AWARDING VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANTS 2023/24

1 DECISIONS BEING RECOMMENDED

- 1.1 That the processes and procedures for allocating the Voluntary Sector Grants fund be continued for the financial year 2023/24.
- 1.2 That it be agreed that this process remains clear and transparent whilst aligning outcomes with those identified in the Rochford District Council (RDC) Business Plan relating to partnership working and links to the Joint Rochford & Castle Point Health & Wellbeing Strategy (HWBS) 2022-25.
- 1.3 That it be agreed that the Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Services (RRAVS) receive top sliced funding from the same pot, based on outcomes aligned with the Essex County Council performance framework and the HWBS Action Plan.

2 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 2.1 Providing financial assistance to local voluntary organisations enables communities and helps to generate a stronger third sector in the district. This is particularly crucial currently as the third sector moves into new ways of delivering outcomes.
- 2.2 A close focus on the RDC Business Plan and HWBS outcomes will provide information and understanding of the wider system impacts of the voluntary sector grants fund in the district.

3 SALIENT INFORMATION

- 3.1 Applications for small grants is open to all voluntary sector groups that meet established criteria. Any one group can apply for revenue funding to a maximum of £1,000. No capital funding will be available.
- 3.2 All funding will be allocated subject to applicants demonstrating how their activities contribute to the HWBS outcomes, which align with the RDC business plan priority – Enabling Communities. These outcomes include:-
 - Mental health and wellbeing
 - Physical health
 - Ageing well

- Community resilience

- 3.3 A Member Advisory Group will be set up by the Portfolio Holder and will advise on the grant allocations using an agreed scoring system.
- 3.4 It is intended that the funding to RRAVS will be top sliced from the overall pot up to a total of £15,000. The Council will assess the application from RRAVS separately and they will be asked to provide additional information on how their service meets the needs of local voluntary and community sector groups and residents.
- 3.5 A scoring system for assessing small grant applications will ensure the process is consistent, open and transparent. This is particularly important if any decisions are challenged. The advisory group will also receive details of applicants that are currently receiving rental subsidy or non-domestic rate relief, or any other support from the Council. Unsuccessful applicants will be signposted to other agencies that may be able to offer support, for example, Big Lottery and Sport England.
- 3.6 A provisional activity timeline is set out below:-

The Executive for agreement on 2023/24 VSG Process	12 April 2023
Open applications for small grants after budget allocation is set and Executive Process Paper approved	20 April 2023
Close small grants applications	19 May 2023
Portfolio Holder to consult Member Advisory Group to determine small grant allocations from applications received	22-23 May 2023
Allocations made	May 2023

- 3.7 For 2020/21 RRAVS received a £15,000 grant and a total of 11 awards were made in small grants ranging from £900 to £1000 to other local organisations. An update report from 2022/23 allocations is appended.

4 RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Any delay in making a decision is likely to inhibit local voluntary groups finalising their budget plans for 2023/24 and impact on the good relationships developed with local groups through the strong partnership and network development with the Health & Wellbeing Board.

5 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 A sum of £25,000 is available to fund the scheme in 2023/24 and total allocations will be contained within this amount.

6 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) has been completed and found there to be no impacts (either positive or negative) on protected groups as defined under the Equality Act 2010. The EIA will be considered in determining the overall budget allocation.

I confirm that the above recommendation does not depart from Council policy and that appropriate consideration has been given to any budgetary and legal implications.

LT Lead Officer Signature: _____



Tracey Lilley
Director of Communities & Health

Background Papers:-

None.

For further information please contact Kelly Redston, Strategic Partnership Officer on:-

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If you would like this report in large print, Braille or another language please contact 01702 318111.

Voluntary Sector Grant 2022/23 Outcomes Highlight Report

Changes were made to the VSG process in 2019/20 that enabled us to look at applications for small grants up to £1000. They aligned with outcomes identified in the Rochford District Council (RDC) Business Plan and those strategically important projects including homelessness, which involves partnership working and has strong links to our Joint Rochford & Castle Point Health & Wellbeing Strategy (HWBS) 2022-2025.

The vision set out in the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-25 is:

‘Castle Point and Rochford will be inclusive places where everyone is empowered, informed, and supported to live healthy lives.’

Castle Point and Rochford have a joint Health and Wellbeing Board. It is a partnership of local organisations working together to promote wellbeing across Castle Point and the Rochford District. The Board is made up of people from:

- [Castle Point Borough Council](#) and [Rochford District Council](#)
- [Castle Point and Rochford Clinical Commissioning Group](#)
- [Essex County Council](#)
- [Essex Partnership University Trust](#) who provide community health services
- Community and voluntary sector organisations including [Citizens Advice](#), [CAVS](#), [RRAVS](#), [The Megacentre Rayleigh](#), [South East and Central Essex Mind](#), [Bar ‘ N’ Bus](#), [Trust Links](#), [Canvey Island Youth Project](#) and [Hawkwell Baptist Church](#)

We are committed to working together to deliver the right help and support for our residents. We want to enable them to live healthier and happier lives. Our Board has the following aims and objectives:

- To address the health needs and challenges within our local communities
- To deliver our strategy and review our progress each year
- To share information, resources, and best practice
- To look at new ways of working to create a connected and sustainable offer for the people of Castle Point and Rochford

The Strategy Key Pillars

We have centred our strategy around three pillars:

- **People** – to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents across all ages and target resource proportionately based on need
- **Purpose** – for residents to feel empowered to improve their health and wellbeing, and to build resilience, to enable them to live well
- **Place** – working at a local level to build healthy, active, and thriving communities that people feel connected to.

The Strategy Principles

We have also based our strategy on 10 key principles that underpin its delivery:

1. **Early intervention and prevention.** This means stopping problems from happening, where possible, and dealing with them at an earlier stage when they do so that they don't get worse
2. Helping people to be **resilient**. This means having the knowledge, skills, and confidence to manage their health and be able to bounce back from tough times
3. Supporting people in a wholesome way, taking account of their individual needs and circumstances. We call this a **person-centred approach**.
4. **Working together** to build, strengthen, and maintain relationships and trust, and join up better with services
5. **Reducing health inequalities** by tackling the social factors that affect health
6. Being able to **adapt and respond** to ever-changing needs, mobilise resources quickly, and scale up when needed
7. **Sharing information** to make it easier to know who does what and where so that we all know what is available near where we live
8. **Clear communication**. Spreading messages in different ways. This means we can reach more people and makes it easier for them to find, access and connect into the help they need
9. Making best use of our **assets**. These can be things like our buildings, but also knowledge and resources
10. **A place-based approach**. Creating opportunities, as well as the right environment for people to live well

We want to provide more services that help people to be as healthy and well as they can be and prevent them from developing health problems.

The 4 strategy priorities

We have used data and insight to identify the main health challenges and opportunities we see in Castle Point and Rochford. From this we have agreed our four priorities:

- Mental health and wellbeing
- Physical health and wellbeing
- Ageing well
- Community resilience

The different themes and opportunities that we will focus on within each of these priorities are outlined in this strategy. Some themes cut across all four priorities due to their interlinking nature.

The full strategy can be seen as a PDF version [Castle Point & Rochford Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2025 - The MegaCentre Rayleigh](#) or as information and videos on the councils website at [Castle Point & Rochford Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-25 | Rochford Council](#)

RRAVS Grant Overview 2022-2023**Winter Pressures & Cost of Living Support**

- 20 Warm Banks in the district, delivered primarily by faith groups and supported with volunteers.
- 10 warm banks supported through funding from RDC
- The attendance at the warm banks has been sporadic but for those who have attended, have been thankful of the welcome received.
- Referring families to local foodbanks has seen a 40% increase year on year. We have supported foodbanks with products through funding from ECC.
- RRAVS is the main point of contact for the Winter Pressures Hub with support from thehub@themegacentre, supporting residents with food, medicine collection, befriending after being discharged from hospital. Uptake was slow to start but is now starting to pick up.

Mental Health & Wellbeing

- Our Hockley Social Group supported each week by 6-8 volunteers, has supported 28 residents to reduce their social isolation and improve their mental health & wellbeing by interacting with weekly activities including quizzes, speakers, craft activities such as flower arranging, physical activity such as seated yoga and belly dancing.
- Our weekly bereavement support group has supported over 60 residents with peer support and activities. This is delivered each week by a team of 6 volunteers who are able to support those attending at various stages of bereavement. This group has seen a rise in the number of people attending since the end of the pandemic.

Community Resilience

- 5 First Aid courses have been delivered and 64 staff & volunteers from the Community & Voluntary sector have been trained in First Aid for the Workplace through a 1-day course.
- AGM 2022 included a market place event and the launch of the BBC Make A Difference awards during a presentation from Mr Dave Monk. The event enabled the public and organisations to network.
- 12 new member organisations have been added to our membership.
- 10 organisations have been supported with funding enquiries and 2 with governance information.

Volunteering

- 3 new organisations have been added to the Volunteer Essex database for this district.
- There has been a 22% increase in the number of volunteering opportunities available compared to last year and some of those include countywide opportunities such as Healthwatch Essex.
- There has however been a 2% decrease compared to last year to the number of people looking for volunteering opportunities. This is a county wide issue and some of the reasons for this include people returning to work for financial reasons/family members supporting with childcare so other family members can work/no financial resources to volunteer. We expect this issue to continue for some time.

Victoria Marzouki
March 2023

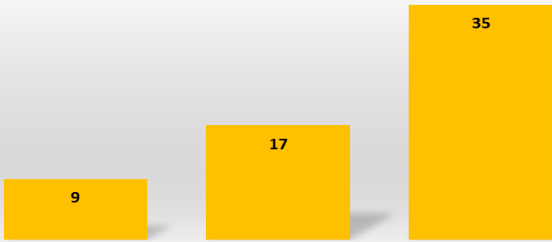
A range of grants were allocated to other voluntary sector organisations totalling £10,000 outcomes are highlighted in the table below:

	Organisation and Project	Amount Allocated	Outcomes Reported
1	Home-start Essex	£1000	<p>From April 1st 2022 to date, Home-Start Essex has supported 795 families across Mid, South and West Essex. We have continued to deliver and develop our portfolio of services to meet the needs of local families and maintain a volunteer base of approximately 150 trained volunteers across the county who deliver these services alongside circa 38 paid staff members.</p> <p>Within the Rochford district specifically, our services have benefited 39 unique families, with parents and carers, and their children having received one or more services as detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 4 families have benefited from virtual befriending, with regular telephone/ video calls or texts from a supportive volunteer - 10 have attended events organised by Home-Start Essex, including a visit to Hyde Hall Gardens - 1 family has attended a weekly Family Group - 8 families have enjoyed weekly visits for 2/3 hours every week, from a trained volunteer to support them and their family in their own home <p>Difficulties with mental health and emotional wellbeing continue to be a prevalent need for families for families referred into our services. In Rochford during the funding period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 19 families have attended a six-week Wellbeing programme with wellbeing activities designed to benefit the whole family - 4 parents/ carers received 1:1 wellbeing supported from our therapeutically trained Wellbeing Coordinator <p>Post the Covid-19 lockdowns, a growing number of parents have shared that they were experiencing difficulties understanding and managing their children's behaviour. They partially attribute this to the lack of socialisation during the pandemic, and/ or that they and/ or their children were experiencing social anxiety when meeting others face-to-face when</p>

		<p>restrictions were lifted. For some, parents are worried that their child(ren) have undiagnosed additional needs and due to increased pressures on services, are facing lengthy waits for paediatric assessments or support. In response to this, we have engaged with an experienced Behavioural Specialist who has now joined our staff team, and is working to support parents experiencing difficulties in this area. In the Rochford district:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 5 families have received 1:1 support and advice about difficulties managing their child(ren)'s behaviour from our Behaviour Specialist - 11 families have attended a group workshop delivered support and advice about difficulties managing their child(ren)'s behaviour led by our Behaviour Specialist <p>The cost-of-living crisis has continued to impact on families' ability to cope with the demands of bringing up a young family. Through our local corporate and community networks we have been able to source donations of essential items (such as food and toiletries) and gifts at Christmas for local families who are struggling financially. We are conduits for the Household Fund, so have continued to distribute food and fuel vouchers to families where there are experiencing financial hardship.</p> <p>Project Outcomes:</p> <p>For those families supported in Rochford during the funding period, who identified that they had need</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 100% of parents stated they felt they were coping better with mental health and emotional wellbeing - 91% identified that their self-esteem and confidence had improved - 92% stated they felt less isolated, which could be due to an improved peer support network and/ or having increased access and/ or knowledge of local support services - 92% stated that they are more confident managing their child's behaviour - 90% stated that they felt that more confident in their understanding of their child's development. - Two thirds of parents felt that they were coping better with stress caused by conflict within the family <p>Here are some quotes from parents living in Rochford, supported by HSE over the past year explaining how our support have made a difference to them and their children:</p> <p><i>'Support has definitely helped. I have really appreciated the amount of help given to me including behaviour support as well as the time you have taken to check in on me, arrange trips and generally seeing if I'm OK.'</i></p> <p><i>'Having opportunities to talk was really helpful and helped me get through a hard year. My volunteer supported me through postnatal depression and helped me look at support for children's additional needs.'</i></p> <p><i>'I feel much more in control and less stressed. I don't feel like I'm going crazy. I feel like I'm managing the kids' behaviour a lot better.'</i></p> <p><i>'Oh god, [Home-Start Essex] has helped me 100%. From matching me with [my volunteer], to all the financial help they gave me. I really gelled with [my volunteer] straight away. She was so easy to talk to. Me and the kids looked forward to her visits and they are already asking where she is.'</i></p> <p><i>'Before I was not confident about writing and reading but my volunteer has helped and I feel less self-conscious.'</i></p>
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			<p><i>'I feel I have a better understanding of my child's point of view and what his behaviour means.'</i></p> <p><i>'[Support from Home-Start Essex has made me feel] less isolated. I have swapped numbers with the mums in the group and am meeting up with one soon at Hockley Woods.'</i></p> <p>We thank Rochford District Council for their commitment to supporting our work over the past year; support has helped us continue to deliver vital services to families, as they have faced their challenges during both the period of recovery post lockdown and the current cost-of-living crisis.</p>
2	Hamelin Trust	£1000	<p>The charity is very grateful to Rochford District Council (RDC) for their donation of £1,000, which has been used to add value to the sessions that we deliver at 'Roots and Shoots', a horticultural training project for people with learning disabilities and autism.</p> <p>RDC's funding allowed us to purchase a range of tools, benches, paint, materials and other accessories, so that we could equip our woodwork room and start to teach our trainee gardeners additional skills. The gardeners have built bird tables, raised beds and repaired fencing and beds around the plot with the skills they now have confidence to use.</p> <p>These tools allow us to teach gardeners a wider level of skills than they currently have. Most of our gardeners aren't allowed to use these kinds of tools at home as their families/carers either do not have them or in most cases deem it too dangerous. These are skills that they can retain for life and can be used in work or home settings.</p> <p>The other massive benefit of this funding has been the opportunity that gardeners have had to see projects from design through to completion, giving an enormous sense of pride and achievement.</p> <p>With the equipped woodwork room and the training modules that our team have developed and can now deliver, this funding has also helped the charity to add a new dimension to our offer, which will be of great benefit when attracting new gardeners in the future.</p>
3	The London Bus Theatre Company	£1000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . Increased awareness about the many dangers of alcohol and risk taking behaviour . Young people's awareness increased on the dangers of alcohol on personal safety, drink driving, antisocial behaviour, injury and short and long term health problems. . Young people increased knowledge about alcohol . Young people's awareness of how alcohol could influence risk taking behaviour . Young people have been provided with a forum to discuss ways of coping with peer pressure <p>Our observations found that the majority of students, regardless of age, social background, race or creed had experienced some form of knowledge about alcohol misuse. Sometimes it was a family member or they had seen teenagers out on the streets or adverts on TV. Each class knew at least ten to fifteen different brands of alcoholic drinks. A few students thought that energy drinks such as Monster and Red Bull were alcoholic.</p> <p>The most impactful points of the workshop were:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Using the "Drunk and Dangerous" glasses to show effects after 10 units 2. Alcohol as a drug is an anesthetic. This was a fact most teachers weren't aware of either. 3. Group discussion about alcohol misuse and personal safety.

			<p>4. Pupils discussing peer pressure and ways to cope with it when they reach secondary school.</p> <p>5. Link to ASB.</p>
4	Supporting Carers and Families Together	£1000	<p>The 2022-23 year has been a very challenging year for all, but particularly for those young people supporting someone in their household with a care need. The main themes to have come from our work with young carers over the past 12 months have been those of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • increased social isolation • withdrawal/suspension of home support services for cared-for people and increased difficulty accessing those services still operating • difficulties in acquiring food and maintaining other levels of self support due to cost of living <p>The grant was used to facilitate the hire of venues for the provision of our respite group sessions.</p> <p>This service has been able to deliver targeted support to families most in need, providing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emotional support • Referral to other services, e.g. the local Covid hub (particularly around food supply/poverty) & mental health • Advocacy in relationships with other services to facilitate additional support delivery • Education/Home learning support/Liaison with school <p>. The service has been both reactive to contacts initiated by our families and pro-active in reaching out to as many families as possible to offer reassurance that support is available if needed. We have also conducted a number of consultation exercises with our families</p> <p>We have also worked pro-actively to disseminate factual information to families to counter fake news stories related to the Covid pandemic, as well as deliver pre-designed learning sessions to facilitate those struggling with home study. Given the huge shift to online communication over the past 12 months we have also focused on making CEOP developed online safety learning materials available to our families to encourage safe internet usage for both adults and young people, to counter the rise in exploitative activity. Our RDC grant has been instrumental in allowing us to make these changes in delivery, alongside those from other funders.</p> <p>Outcomes achieved include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Worked to provide early intervention in the lives of young carers and their families to prevent needs escalating to require more intense health, mental health and social care service involvement • Built the skills in young people to enable them to be more resilient to life's challenges • Worked to tackle inequalities and to enable everyone to lead healthier, safer and more fulfilling lives • Consulted and engaged with our service users to ensure the local community are involved and listened to with regard to meeting existing needs and to developing services to counter emerging needs • Worked to improve the mental health and wellbeing of those with caring responsibilities, particularly those suffering due to social isolation because of this role • Supported young people and families where there are long-term health issues and disabilities <p>We have had contact with and supported around 170 young people with caring responsibilities, from approximately 150 families across the district. We have provided support to local schools (3 secondary and 5 primary) to help them identify and better support young carers.</p>

			<p>Our families and young people have been very vocal in expressing their reliance on these groups to provide much needed social contact and respite from their situations.</p> <p>We have received many comments from service users and their families such as:</p> <p>"I am glad to be back at Young Carers, I have missed my friends here"</p> <p>"we really do appreciate everything SCAFT does for our family, we couldn't do it without your help and support."</p>								
5	Rayleigh Vineyard – Growbaby	£500	<p>GrowBaby is part of Rayleigh Vineyard Church and its aim to assist families who are in financial need by providing recycled baby and children's clothing and equipment.</p> <p>Over 250 bundles of recycled children's clothing and equipment plus nappies and formula milk were delivered by GrowBaby during 2022. In addition to relieving</p> <p>Poverty during this cost of living crisis these deliveries reduced social isolation by letting these families know they weren't forgotten.</p> <p>In addition recycling the clothes and equipment reduced the amount going into landfill by over 1,000 KG.</p> <p>The grant from Rochford Council, along with other grants and donations made this possible.</p>								
6	REMAP - Essex South Branch	£1000	<p>When we applied for the 2022-23 Voluntary Sector Grant, we outlined our intended outcomes. Eight months after receiving the money, we are progressing well with our objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- With the aim of growing our volunteer base from seven to twenty, we are fast approaching our target with seventeen registered volunteers in our branch.- In steady state, we want to be able to help a minimum of 50 clients per year and we are pleased with great year-over-year progress which puts us on track to achieve this in 2023-24 (see Figure 1) <p>We are also increasing awareness of Remap in the area. In the past year we have built relationships with Forget Me Not Caring, Badgers Den, RRAVS, CAVS, the 3-Chambers of Trade, Rochford Hospital, King Edmunds School, South Essex Hackspace, Ford Motor Co, Brown & Carroll Ltd and RPC. This work continues.</p> <p>ALL LABOUR, including design / making of equipment, admin and supporting functions, remains a voluntary function and is not charged to the charity. The materials we need (metal, wood, 3D printing filament, fabric, fasteners, etc.) come from grants, fundraising and donations. Our projects vary significantly in complexity, however...</p> <div><p>Referrals (people requesting our help)</p><table><thead><tr><th>Period</th><th>Referrals</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>2020-21</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>2021-22</td><td>17</td></tr><tr><td>2022-23 (to date)</td><td>35</td></tr></tbody></table><p>Figure 1</p></div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- the average cost of a project is £97- the average volunteer time consumed on a project is 15 hours	Period	Referrals	2020-21	9	2021-22	17	2022-23 (to date)	35
Period	Referrals										
2020-21	9										
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2022-23 (to date)	35										

			Volunteers who design and make our bespoke equipment are skilled engineers, craftsmen and designers. If Remap had to pay for labour, we would be looking at an average of around £500 per item instead of the current £97!
7	Footprints Community Group	£1000	<p>We received funding towards our weekly dance sessions. These are undoubtedly our most successful youth activity with the sessions starting from 4pm running through to 8pm. Providing a diversionary activity in a safe environment.</p> <p>The sessions provided an opportunity for young people take part in an activity they may not normally have access to. They develop social skills, team work, gain confidence, learn dance an exercise.</p> <p>Each year the dance group put together 2 community events each year – their annual fundraiser which is held at King Edmund school (re-investing the income back into the dance sessions) and they also perform at the annual Rochford Parish Christmas Festival.</p> <p>These are skills that can help them in their lives post school, with one.</p> <p>The grant this year enabled us to reach more residents than ever before.</p>
8	Bar n Bus Trust	£500	<p>Bar 'n' Bus has continued to grow over the past year with significant developments outside of the Rochford District. Rochford, however, remains a key area of our work and especially well supported by volunteers.</p> <p>With Aaron Watts, our Youth Development Worker for Rochford, moving to a new role at Christmas 2021, we relied heavily on the volunteer team to support the work as we sought to re-appoint.</p> <p>During April to August 2021 we training 6 new mentors to increase our 1-2-1 support for young people in our local secondary schools, and key volunteers support members of our team to continue detached youth in Hullbridge, Hawkwell and Rayleigh.</p> <p>In September, volunteers support the launch of Being Me in Rayleigh – an inclusive project which started as a Young Women's Self Defence Course and has grown into a weekly peer support/activity programme.</p> <p>Gareth Williamson was appointed to the Area Youth Development Worker role in September, and has continued to develop the work with the team of volunteers. This has included making use of our new Mobile Youth Vehicle which is deployed in a number of locations weekly as a drop-in, safe space for young people in their communities.</p> <p>This grant has assisted in the ongoing recruitment and support of our volunteers who have made these programmes possible in Rochford by covering the costs of training programmes, tutors, venues and teambuilding events.</p>
9	Wyvern Community Transport	£1000	The grant was used towards our Volunteer Expenses. Volunteers are unpaid but are entitled to claim their travel expenses. In addition we provide our volunteers with their uniform, steel toed trainers or boots and Hi Viz safety clothing. Further costs include those associated with training courses such as Basis First Aid and costs associated with the CTA's Midas Training
10	Coffee Cake and Chat	£500	<p>The funding from Rochford Council was paid directly into the WI Hall account. This money paid the rent for Coffee Cake and Chat for a number of months enabling us to remain open to assist in providing a meeting place for people.</p> <p>It has also provided during the cold months a warm space for people to meet. Thank you without your help we would have probably had to close down.</p>
11	Memory Lane Café	£500	The funding allowed for the ongoing costs of the café to be met> This included for entertainment, games and social events especially appropriate for the target audience. Activities also included physical and emotional activities aimed at supporting people living with dementia and their carers.

			<p>Each month we have over 30 attendees come to the session and this continues to grow.</p> <p>Some feedback we have received though evaluation is:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 'IMPROVED MENTAL WELLBEING - IT'S SO LOVELY TO GET OUT AND MEET PEOPLE. WE FEEL SO MUCH BETTER AFTERWARDS - MORE CONFIDENT IN MEETING NEW PEOPLE' 2. 'GETTING OUT GIVES SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO - GIVES AN OPPORTUNITY TO MEET AND CONVERSE WITH PEOPLE AND HAVE A LAUGH! - HELPS ME TO MEET NEW PEOPLE' 3. 'MUM IS HAPPY, SMILING AND STIMULATED - A LOVELY COMMUNITY FEELING FOR PEOPLE IN SIMILAR CIRCUMSTANCES - BEFORE TODAY WE HAD ONLY ATTENDED ONE EVENT PRE-LOCKDOWN BUT HAVE REALLY ENJOYED IT. LOOKING FORWARD TO BECOMING MORE INVOLVED' 4. 'THANK YOU AND THE MEMORY LANE COMMITTEE FOR A LOVELY AFTERNOON. IT WAS SO GOOD FOR US ESPECIALLY TERRY WHO DOESN'T TALK ON THE TELEPHONE OR HAVE MANY CONVERSATIONS WITH ANYONE BUT THE FAMILY. PATS ON THE BACK ALL ROUND'
12	ATF Southend	£1000	Application approved but unable to get information back from organisation.

As detailed in the table above the grants given out in 2022/23 were able to achieve a range of outcomes across the H&WB Strategy actions.

These actions and outcomes are in line with the priorities of the H&WB Strategy.

By focusing more closely to Business Plan, Project work and HWBS outcomes, it has enabled us to continue to generate information that informs our understanding of the wider system impacts of the voluntary sector grants fund. It has also enabled us to review the development of the projects, share information about sessions and opportunities and link up organisations that are looking to achieve similar outcomes.

Through continuing to ask applicants to align with these outcomes for future grants, we can more clearly understand the reach and impact of these projects across the district, and review how we might continue to improve the outcomes in these areas with future support and additional opportunities for funding for new ideas and projects. It will enable us to understand more about the projects journey across a period of time and ensure that all grants awarded are used to support the project, as well as to consider the sustainability of the project after the funding period ends. Throughout the period of the grant RDC provides support in various ways; by linking them up with other groups doing similar projects and work to let them share practice, consider outcomes and look at future opportunities to develop together/align. We will also share with community groups any access to additional funding such as the CIF Essex fund, Active Essex monies etc. We also share key communication about the project across the health and wellbeing network, enabling the projects to gain local support and recognition, ensuring where appropriate referral and access information is clear. Within the application process and guidance, we ask organisations that are applying to think about how their project will be sustainable once the VSG funding ends. We ask that the projects and organisations consider sustainability throughout the life of the funding, and where needed, to seek locally appropriate advice and guidance through channels such as RRAVS.