

**Agenda Item** 11

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**Date** 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020

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**Title** Triangle Trust Grant Strategy 2021

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### **1.0 Purpose of paper**

To outline the proposed next steps for developing and implementing the Grants Strategy for 2021 and for Trustees to agree the broad focus areas.

### **2.0 Summary**

Trustees will remember they agreed a further one year grants strategy for 2021 due to the ongoing uncertainty that Covid-19 is causing the charity sector. This paper sets out the next steps that need to be agreed to take the strategy development forward.

- Trustees agreed to still support the unpaid carer and rehabilitation of offenders sectors by adapting our grant making to provide a different kind of support to Development Grants.
- This paper proposes the development of a funding programme in 2021 focused on young people which has the capacity to make a significant contribution to this extremely vulnerable and marginalised group:
  - Carers funding would be targeted at young carers impacted by Covid-19 and support them through the additional challenges they are experiencing.
  - Rehabilitation of offenders funding would be focused on supporting projects that help young offenders under the age of 25 to secure employment. Priority given to organisations working with young women, young people who have been through the care system and young people from BAME communities.
- These two specific areas would provide a unique opportunity to support two distinct but discrete issues under the banner of young people.
- Work now needs to take place to develop the criteria for the grants programmes, aims of the funding and a Theory of Change which will come to the December meeting for approval with the aim to begin in March 2021.

- **3.0 Recommendations**

Trustees are requested to

- (i) Approve the development of a programme that focuses on the theme of young people for 2021.
- (ii) Agree the dual focus of
  - a. Young carers who have been impacted by Covid-19
  - b. and young people who have been through the criminal justice system and are either female, have been 'Looked After' or are from BAME communities.

## **4.0 Supporting information**

- 4.1 The decision to have a one-year strategy for 2021 has provided the opportunity to look at how Triangle Trust can provide crucial support in a slightly different way whilst continuing our support for unpaid carers and ex-offenders.

As the UK navigates its way through Covid-19 it is clear that some groups are going to be impacted more than others and young people have been identified as being disproportionately affected. Young offenders and young carers are two groups likely to fare particularly badly as they already face huge inequalities that will be further exacerbated. The negative impacts this will cause are likely to have lifelong consequences, unless support is offered to address some of the challenges they will face.

Since June I have been in close contact with organisations working in these two sectors, other funders and other relevant stakeholders and organisations and used their knowledge and insights to identify where support would be best placed.

### **Young Carers**

There are estimated to be around 800,000 young carers in the UK and a young carer is defined as a person under 18 who looks after someone who is ill, disabled or misuses drugs or alcohol. Financial support in the form of a Carer's Allowance is only available to those over the age of 16 despite evidence to show that some children start caring as young as age five. Young carers already experience significant disadvantage to their peers – over a quarter of young carers are forced to miss school and experience educational difficulties due to their caring responsibilities. Worryingly, 39% of young carers recently shared that nobody in their school was even aware of their caring responsibilities. And recent studies highlighted that over a third of young carers reported having a mental health problem.

Organisations such as the Carers Trust have recently published the results of a survey they carried out on the impact of Covid-19 on young carers and young adult carers. Key statistics include:

- Increased mental health worries with 40% of young carers and 59% of young adult carers reporting worse mental health since Covid-19.
- Increased concerns about the future with 67% of young carers and 78% of young adult carers reporting being more worried since Covid-19.
- Increased stress levels for 66% of young carers and 74% of young adult carers since Covid 19.
- Increased isolation with 69% of both young carers and young adult carers feeling less connected to others since Covid-19.
- An increase of 30 hours or more in the amount of time spent caring each week was reported by 11% of young carers and 19.7% of young adult carers.

These findings clearly show that Covid-19 has had a big impact on young carers who more than ever need support for their emotional wellbeing and mental health, breaks and respite from their caring role and help from specialist young carers and young adult carers services. This would help them to balance caring, so that they can

succeed in education and employment, stay connected to friends and their communities and stay well and physically fit.

“There are no limits to what young carers and young adult carers can achieve in their lives with the right support. However, when they don't receive it this can have a lasting impact on their life chances, their physical and mental health and their income”. (Carers Trust – My Future, My Feelings, My Family) July 2020.

## **Young Offenders**

Despite falling numbers of children and young people who are in custody, evidence seems to suggest that those sentenced are more likely to display an entrenched pattern of offending behaviour. They are more likely to have committed serious offences and have a higher number of problems.

- Over two thirds of children and young people reoffend on release and reoffending rates are substantially higher amongst young adults in the criminal justice system than older adult offenders.
- Whilst fewer than one percent of all children in England are in care, Looked after Children make up 33% of boys and 61% of girls in custody. Therefore, many young offenders have had complicated and chaotic lives. They may have experienced trauma, abuse, bereavement, been excluded from school, have mental health problems or addiction issues around drugs or alcohol.
- Data also shows that 11% of children in prison have attempted suicide.
- In 2019 it was found that more than half of the inmates held in prisons for young people in England and Wales were from a black and minority ethnic background, the highest proportion on record. The proportion of BAME boys and men behind bars in Young Offenders Institutions in England and Wales is nearly four times the 14% BAME proportion of the wider UK population.

Rehabilitation of young offenders is complex and the transition from custody back into the community can be an overwhelmingly stressful experience. Young people can find it hard to cope and struggle with the adjustments to the sudden change in life regime, environment and the re-establishing and renegotiation of relationships. Secure housing, strong relationships and employment are three of the key factors in successful rehabilitation of offending behaviour.

A recent report by Resolution Foundation has found that under-25s are hardest hit by the economic fallout of Covid-19. One in three young people were furloughed or lost their jobs completely and over one in three had their pay reduced. Large numbers of young people are traditionally employed in the sectors most severely affected by the lockdown – such as leisure, retail and hospitality. These sectors often provide routes into employment for ex-offenders. With employment being such a crucial component to successful rehabilitation from offending, the challenges for a young ex-offender finding a job when there is so much competition are likely to be significant. The need for support in this area therefore has never been more pressing.

4.2 It is recommended that we continue with the current grant making formula of spending approximately £650,000 across the two funding areas in 2021. The length of grants and maximum amount available will be agreed by March 2021.

## **5.0 Outcomes and Impact**

A Theory of Change will be developed for the strategy that will identify the rationale for focusing our support in the areas and the outcomes that we are hoping our funding will contribute to. This will help to articulate the aims of the strategy, how we are going to deliver it and how we expect change to happen. This document will help us to be clear about our purpose which will benefit grantees and enable us to tell a stronger story about the impact our support has had.

## **6.0 Risks**

This is a new approach for us, so we have to ensure that we identify and manage any risks. The carer sector has traditionally struggled to fit quality proposals to our Development Grants criteria and the rehabilitation of offenders' sector is very fast moving and adaptive. As we will still be supporting these areas, albeit in a different way, we are unlikely to be viewed as taking our support away from this sector at such a challenging time. The main risk is likely to be increased interest in our funding opportunities and how we manage this. To reduce speculative applications, we will need to develop a criteria and shortlisting process that enables us to be clear about the specific issues and approaches we will support. This will help to reduce the number of applications received and effective filters at initial shortlisting will help to identify strong proposals for consideration by Trustees.