

**Meeting** Trustee Board meeting

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**Date** 18 June 2020

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**Title** 2021 strategy update

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**Agenda item** 12

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**Paper by** Victoria Southwell

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### **1.0 Purpose of paper**

To update Trustees on the progress made towards developing the new Triangle Trust strategy for 2021 onwards and agree the way forward.

### **2.0 Background**

Trustees will recall that at the December 2019 Trustee Meeting a strategy paper was agreed outlining next steps for the development of the new grant making strategy for Triangle Trust. Trustees agreed a one-year strategy for 2020/21 and that a new three-year strategy would be developed for launch in April 2021. The December 2020 and March 2021 Trustee Meetings were set aside for considering and agreeing the detail of the new strategy.

### **3.0 Current situation**

When the timings for the development of a new strategy were agreed nobody anticipated nor recognised the significant impact that the Covid-19 pandemic was going to have on society. In the space of weeks day to day life changed considerably and the whole of the charitable sector was turned on its head. The changes were far reaching and included challenges with fundraising and other previously secure income, adapting to home working and changing the way that beneficiaries were supported.

The sector as a whole has responded to the situation admirably and funders have been flexible with existing grantees as well as opening up significant pots of emergency funding to provide support during this time. The two sectors we currently support are weathering the storm as best they can and facing different kinds of challenges.

## **Rehabilitation of Offenders**

For many in the rehab of offender's sector, funding has remained relatively secure as many organisations operate on contract-based funding and these contracts have still been honoured. The biggest issues for our grantees have been access to clients;

- prisons have remained closed to projects so through the gate support has been suspended.
- Referrals from partner agencies are also slow to materialise so the focus of efforts has been on providing support through phone calls and video conferencing.

There have been grantees who have played a key role in supporting Covid-19 work with prisoners though – Prison Radio Association, who were awarded a grant in March 2020, have reported that National Prison Radio has been a key way of Covid-19 information being shared in prisons and also helping prisoners to keep in touch with their families.

## **Carers**

For the carers sector meeting the immediate needs of carers has been a priority. Many carers are either looking after those in the most vulnerable groups to Covid-19 or are in that group themselves. They are also having to deal with extreme social isolation (especially if self-isolating) and getting absolutely no respite from their caring activities. Our own emergency grant funding has helped meet some of these needs as well as support effective homeworking.

The next 6-12 months will be critical for the two sectors that we support. It is hard to predict at this point the long-term impact of the pandemic on the charitable sector landscape and what kind of support will be most needed to help organisations survive and thrive.

We should therefore consider if now is the right time to still be developing a three-year funding strategy at a time when huge uncertainty will still exist. Based on conversations with other funders, grantees and leading charity sector national organisations the emerging sense is that this is not the right time.

There is however a unique opportunity to do something a little different next year, in terms of our grant making focus, to support these two sectors. We have seen a consistent drop in application numbers for Development Grants in both the carers and rehabilitation of offenders rounds and also seen a significant drop in quality in the carers applications. Our funding could potentially be better used supporting some more immediate needs rather than continuing with the current criteria for a further 12 months.

Alongside this we also need to consider our own financial position. With significantly reduced income predicted for 2021/22 (potentially between 25-50%) this would be a good time to think about our options, budget, focus and impact for a further year before committing to a more long-term strategy.

#### **4.0 Next Steps**

I would like Trustees to consider delaying the new three-year strategy until 2022 and agree the following;

- To adopt a further one-year strategy for 2021/22
- Task the Director with looking at alternative ways of supporting the carers and rehabilitation of offenders sector in 2021/22 to reflect the needs of the sector post Covid-19
- Agree to discuss how to address the implications of future income and whether capital should be used if required at October 2020 Trustee Meeting
- Agree to consider and input into new draft strategy at October 2020 Trustee meeting
- Agree to the new strategy for 2021/22 at December 2020 Trustee meeting